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July / August 2009

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OUTLOOKS CANADA'S GLBT MAGAZINE

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Outlooks is sizzlin' this summer!

June proved to be a very busy, but not unanticipated, month for *Outlooks Magazine*. As most of you know, our June issue was the big transformation from a newsprint tabloid publication to that of a full-gloss magazine. We think that the publication looked better, and our content was enhanced by increasing the numbers of pages. We hope this better serves the overall GLBT community.

Using the response we received to last month's issue as an indication, we are certainly headed in the right direction with a product that the community is expecting. Within days of the issue's hitting the streets, we were being inundated with calls from our distribution points with requests for more and more copies of the issue. As one Toronto distributor put it, they seemed to be "literally flying off the shelves."

And when we add to that the literally hundreds of emails, letters and subscription requests that followed, we were, to say the least, very pleased with the response from the readership—both old and new! We extend a quick thank you to everyone who took the time and effort to let us know what they thought about the changes, as well those that offered suggestions to help make the publication even more successful.

We took a great deal of that feedback to heart, and are already working towards implementing some of the suggestions.

I also want to take this opportunity to introduce you to a soon-to-be new member of the *Outlooks* editorial team—Randall Shirley. Randall is the former Editor in Chief of

Out in Canada Magazine, and he will be taking on the new role of *Outlooks* Travel Editor. So if your passion is travel, gay-focused or otherwise, Randall will be bringing it all to *Outlooks Magazine* beginning this September. Randall, aside from being a gifted editor, is also a highly sought after and respected Canadian travel writer whose work has appeared in such noted publications as *The Boston Globe, Dallas Morning News, Chicago Tribune, The Calgary Herald, Victoria Times-Colonist, Edmonton Journal, Ottawa Citizen, Vancouver Sun,* and Westjet's *Up Magazine*. And this is, by no means, meant to take away from this issue's travel features of *Finding Gay Peru*, or closer to home, quite possibly *The Gayest Small Town in Canada*.

And that's a good segue into an opportunity to expand on some of the feature articles that are offered in this month's issue.

The Canadian GLBT community lost one of its great media activists lately with the passing of Rick Bebout. For those of us old enough, we will remember his very outspoken and often arrested publication—*Body Politic*. For those too young to know about Rick, the Tribute is also a great Canadian history lesson of those that came before you in this community. Rick will be greatly missed.

It is either ironic, considering the *Body Politic*, or maybe fitting, that this month we have an in-depth interview with Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff and his thoughts on *Equality in Canada and the World*.

And you will also find a great interview with *Canada's Next Power Couple—Patrick Marano and Shaun Proulx*. Shaun, with both a daily radio and television show, not to mention the ever-controversial GayTorontoGuide.com, and his partner, Patrick, who is also his radio co-host.

We also take a closer look at *Common Law and Common Sense* when it comes to relationships. Sometimes we forget to use our common sense when we are in the bliss of a good relationship; so this is a must read for those of us that are either in one, or possibly contemplating a new cohabitation, let's say, maybe, post Pride.

Oh look, another good segue.

I would most definitely be remiss if I did not congratulate Tracey and all of her Pride Toronto team on another fantastic year. It was amazing—over one million at the parade—and that was people, not pieces of garbage.

And while others from the *Outlooks* staff attended Pride in Toronto to represent *Outlooks*, I chose to attend another great Canadian event—the Canadian Rockies International (gay) Rodeo that was held, for the first time, in the small community of Strathmore, Alberta. Hosted by ARGRA (Alberta Rockies Gay Rodeo Assoc.), this annual event also saw a marked increase in weekend attendance with, for example, over 2,000 cowboys and others at the Saturday night dance. Yee haw!

The summer of Prides continues through July and August—so have loads of fun, play safe, and leave your keys at home.

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~ RALPH HIGGINS

Canadian Activist to Hold Rally Protesting US HIV Travel Ban

Martin Rooney of British Columbia works to raise awareness and money for AIDS organizations here in Canada and also in Tijuana. However, he is prevented from doing his work in Mexico because he is denied entry to the US since he is HIV positive. The ban first came into effect in 1993, but was overturned by George W. Bush in the summer of 2008. However, since the Department of Health and Human Services still classifies HIV as a contagious disease, anyone wishing to visit or immigrate to the US must first obtain a waiver and have it approved in advance. This red tape snarl has been loosened only marginally by a new streamlined waiver form provided by the Department of Homeland Security. Many cross-border shoppers, attendees at conferences and sporting events simply choose to avoid the US, rather than deal with the restrictions.

Pressure is being put on the Obama administration to remove these discriminatory regulations. Rooney will hold a rally on August 16 at the Peace Arch on the Canada/US border to bring attention to the hardships imposed by the travel ban. The event, sponsored by E.G.A.L.E, National Gay & Lesbian Task Force – USA, the International Court Council of Canada, US and Mexico, will have Dr. Hedy Fry, MP (Lib) Vancouver Centre and Helen Kennedy, Executive President of E.G.A.L.E. as speakers.

The Pitter Patter of Happy Feet

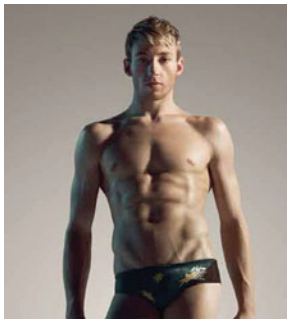
Adding a bit of a queer twist to the nature vs. nurture discussion, a gay male penguin couple at the Bremerhaven zoo in Germany adopted an egg after it was repeatedly rejected by the biological mother. The zoo veterinarian gave the egg to Z and Vielpunkt, one of three same-sex penguin couples at the zoo, and the two penguin dads incubated the egg for thirty days until it hatched and have continued to care for the chick. The trio have become a hit with visitors to the zoo. Similar same-sex adoptions have been reported in zoos in Japan and New York.

Church of Scotland Upholds Appointment of Gay Minister

Reverend Scott Rennie describes himself as "an ordinary parish minister" who suddenly found himself embroiled in controversy. The thirty-seven-year-old, divorced father of one is the minister of Brechin Cathedral who was open about his life, and told his congregation that he was gay and living with his male partner. An organized protest against his appointment was met by an equally supportive group. The majority of his congregation also back Rev. Rennie. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, after four hours, debated, voted 326 to 267 in favour of Rev. Rennie's appointment—an historic first for the church.

Chinese Pride

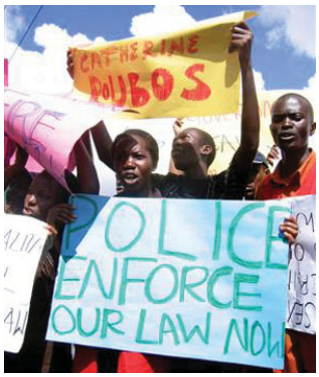
Shanghai, China held that country's first Gay Pride Festival in early June of this year. Homosexuality was removed from China's list of crimes in 1997; but is still perceived in a very negative light by a large percentage of the population. Shanghai Pride hoped the event would raise awareness and initiate positive dialogue among gay and straight Chinese. The festival, which consisted of information lectures, film screenings, cultural activities and a big party at a popular night club was permitted but not promoted by the Chinese government. A partial media blackout was in effect for the first several days of the event. Official estimates of the gay population vary from five to ten million, while other groups say it could be as high as thirty million.



Aussie Olympic Medalist Endorses Gay Games

Matthew Mitcham, the gold medal winner in platform diving at the 2008 Beijing Olympics has made a video and issued a public statement supporting the Gay Games motto of "Participation, Inclusion and Personal Best," and invites the world to take part in the Gay Games 2010 in Cologne, Germany. Mitcham, a Sydney, Australia native was one of only two "out " male athletes at the Olympics and knows how important international events are for both competitors and fans.

Uganda Hosts Anti-Gay Conference



In a country where homosexuality is punishable by death and where gays and lesbians are almost routinely persecuted, it would seem unnecessary to bring in outsiders to make the case against the queer population. However, in June, three American, right-wing anti-gay leaders arrived in Kampala to stage a seminar entitled, "Exposing the Truth Behind Homosexuality and the Homosexual Agenda." The three men are leaders in ex-gay ministries, sexual reorientation groups and one is the author of a book which purports to prove that gays were responsible for the Holocaust. It is feared that this verbal gay-bashing will add fuel to an already raging fire in Uganda where homosexuality is considered immoral and un-African.

Celebs Support Queer Youth in Britain

Stonewall's third annual day for young LGBT people had support from some celebrities during the event in early June. Actor Sir Ian McKellen, snow-boarder Jo Chastney and singer Dan Gillespie Sells were among those invited to serve as role models for the participants who are aged between 16 to 25. The event is intended to foster confidence, explore issues around sexuality and provide practical ideas for being queer in the 21st century. Bullying is an important issue in Britain, as elsewhere. Also in attendance was a theatre group, Team Angelica, who tours schools with a Stonewall play, called FIT, created to challenge homophobia and bullying.

Sir Ian McKellen

Dan Gillespie Sells

Gay Israeli Human Rights Activist Arrested

Ezra Nawi is a man who refuses to stand by and watch when he sees injustice happening. This Jewish, gay man of Iraqi descent earns a living as a plumber. But many know him as a man of quiet courage who is unafraid to confront the Israeli government, military and police to help those ignored or mistreated by the authorities. He was the subject of the film, Citizen Nawi, which showed his work on behalf of under-represented citizens, and also his relationship with his Palestinian partner, Fuad Mussa. Recently, Nawi was arrested for trying to stop the bulldozing of the homes of Bedouins in the Hebron region who have lived under Israeli occupation for decades. An international group of human rights activists are protesting Nawi's arrest and trying to prevent him from being sentenced to jail in July.

And New Hampshire Makes Six

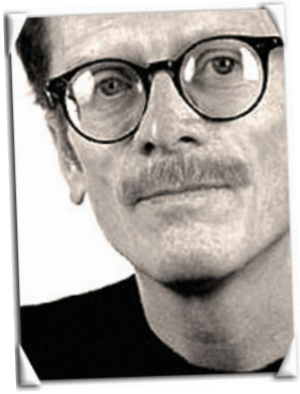
New Hampshire joined its Yankee neighbours of Vermont, Maine, Massachusetts and Connecticut—and the one lone Midwest state of Iowa—to become the sixth state to allow same-sex marriage. The United States are less than united on attitudes towards same-sex marriage. California, through Prop 8, took away the right of queer citizens to marry; but recognizes the 18,000 who wed before the amendment as married couples. New York State is considering legislation on same-sex marriage and receiving support from some surprising sources like former Republican Senate leader Joe Bruno.

Fly the Rainbow Skies of Scandinavia

Scandinavian Airlines wants their queer clients to feel welcome not only during the flight but after they arrive. The company has a web page especially for their LGBT travellers (**www.flysas.com/gay**). The site offers not only information on events such as the Outgames happening in Copenhagen but also maps and guides to bars, sites and events of interest to queer visitors. Besides the Outgames, there is the Rainbow Festival in Malmø, Sweden, Copenhagen Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, and the very intriguing sounding parade of the Viking Bears.

~ SAMANTHA SARRA

Rick Bebout – A Tribute



"Human angels, flesh and blood (and thankfully), nicer than many of God's if with a similar calling: to make visitations, offer revelations to help you truly see—and then fly away."

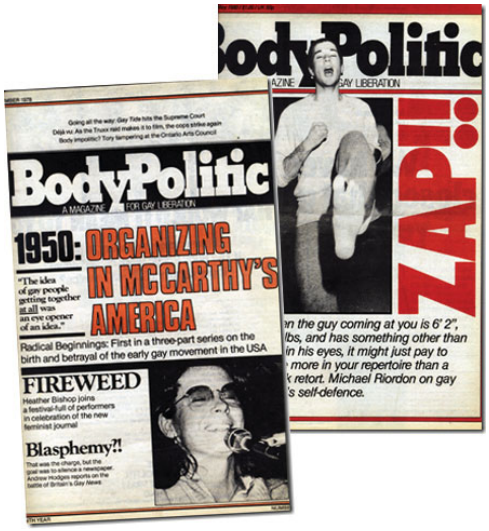
Those words are used by Rick Bebout in his memoirs to describe angelic encounters he had; but he might as well have been writing about himself. Canada's queer community was blessed to be visited by Bebout, whose lifetime of activism and editorial comment helped shaped our perceptions of ourselves. But, sadly, on June 10, 2009, this archiving angel lost his battle with AIDS and, at age 59, has flown away from this planet, which will be forever changed by his gracing of it.

Stefan Lynch Strassfeld is the son of the late Michael Lynch, Canadian gay liberation pioneer, who grew up against the backdrop of the Body Politic. "I've known Rick as long as I can remember. He was gentle, sweet and, unlike some of the other activists at the Body Politic, was good with me. I was the only kid most of them had in their lives. Rick was interested in whatever I had to say. He was patient, asked questions and cracked little jokes with his impish smile. He had the sharpest memory you can imagine," recalls Strassfeld. "It was a party trick I often saw in the late eighties—someone would name a random year and month—like March, 1976—and Rick would tell you the lead article, the photo on the cover, the ink colours, even whether there were problems with the printer for that issue."

"Rick was the unofficial historian at the Body Politic," explains Alan V. Miller, friend and cataloguer at the Canadian Gay and Lesbian Archives. "He taught me that there is hope beyond the bars; but that those bars have played an important role in the growth of our community. He said that the history of local Canadian lesbian and gay bars, newspapers, arts organizations, whatever, is waiting to be written. And that one need not be a historian or ask for permission to write it."

Bebout leaves behind a rich legacy of written words. His website **www.rbebout.com**, contains his book *Promiscuous Affections,* and many other explorations of Canada's urban and queer landscapes over the years. "I am so grateful to him for documenting, through his website writings, the experiences of the early gay liberation efforts in Toronto. It's a real gift to me, as an adult, to read and reflect on these events I witnessed as a kid," says Strassfeld. "And I am so pained that with his death goes a part of that era, of my childhood, my dad, and so many other men who died in the epidemic. He was an irreplaceable trove of Canadian history."

"I met Rick in 1972, and our friendship grew from there," recalls Miller. "In 1977, I was working on compiling a series of bibliographies on homosexuality. When I had exhausted the library system, Rick suggested I visit the Canadian Gay Liberation Movement Archives, which shared offices with the Body Politic. From a single filing cabinet and a few shelves of books and periodicals, then renamed Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (CGLA), it has grown to be the second largest collection of LGBT material in the world, with the largest collection of LGBT periodicals."



"Rick was an early archivist and the force behind the creation of the website for CLGA, which started about 1996. We worked together for months on its structure, trying to add as much content as possible," recalls Miller. " It was all so early in the history of the World Wide Web, and now one can find hundreds of gay and lesbian archives with a presence on the web. Rick encouraged me to give back to community."

Chris Jai Centeno, is a 24-year-old, majoring in anthropology and is one of many youth with whom Bebout shared his time and knowledge, always ensuring that the spark of radical thinking lives on in future generations of queers. "I first met Rick when he was speaking to the Buddies In Bad Times Theatre Summer Youth Project in the summer of 2003," recalls Centeno. "It was particularly interesting that this political activist and writer was more interested in what we were thinking and how we would question the status quo in making sure that queer and trans people became equal in our society."

"Rick was very generous with his insights on queer history, and was extremely supportive and inquisitive. I must have spent hours in his living room where I perused copies of the Body Politic from the 70s and 80s. As a youth, it can sometimes be isolating, especially coming out; but seeing pieces of queer history in those old newsprints, I felt a sense of empowerment and. Ultimately, acceptance of myself. That this is what queers fought for back then to afford queer and trans youth the rights they enjoy today, made me feel honoured."

Journalist Gerald Hannon and writer Merv Walker both worked with Bebout at the Body Politic. "Rick arrived at the Body Politic like a breath of fresh air," says Walker. "He was quick to understand how things worked and lightning fast at seeing how they could work better. That was Rick, as much as he loved to analyze and discuss, he was really obsessed with action."

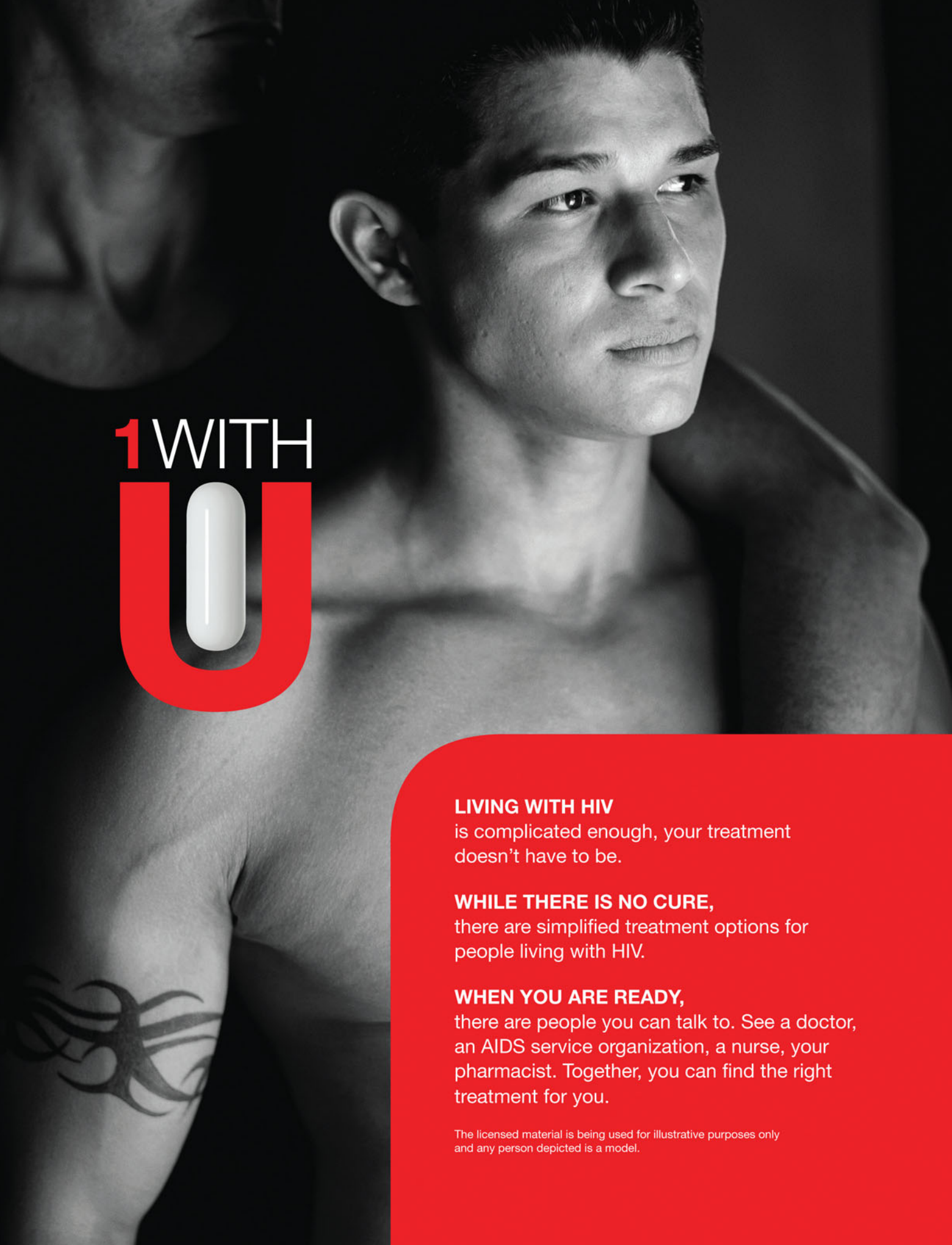
"He taught me to always go back to first principles," says Hannon, "I can get caught up in detail, when it's the big picture one should be looking at. Rick would always say 'What is this for? What are you trying to make happen?' That approach can really clear your mind."

"Rick was bright, articulate, analytical, a pleasure to spend time with and not at all daunted by any apparent lack of credentials," explains Walker. "His book on Union Station (1972, *The Open Gate: Toronto's Union Station*) played a pivotal role in saving it from the wrecking ball, in spite of the fact that he was an American arriviste".

Hannon goes on to reflect, "He was an immigrant, teaching us never to lose sight of the importance of immigrant communities here. His passion went well beyond gay to include the importance of the urban fabric we're all part of. He never stopped thinking."

Bebout kept good company. He was pen pals with literary icon Jane Rule for decades—a correspondence that will be published soon—and, in more recent years, he was exchanging letters with Norwegian pop star Sondre Lerche.

There is a hush in our hearts as our angel of activism and archiving has flown away; but he leaves us with a better sense of ourselves that will always live on. Walker sums it up well, "He took on the task of writing a first-hand account of the revolutionary times in which we lived. Someone had to write the first draft of our history. For Rick, it was just a matter of getting the job done."



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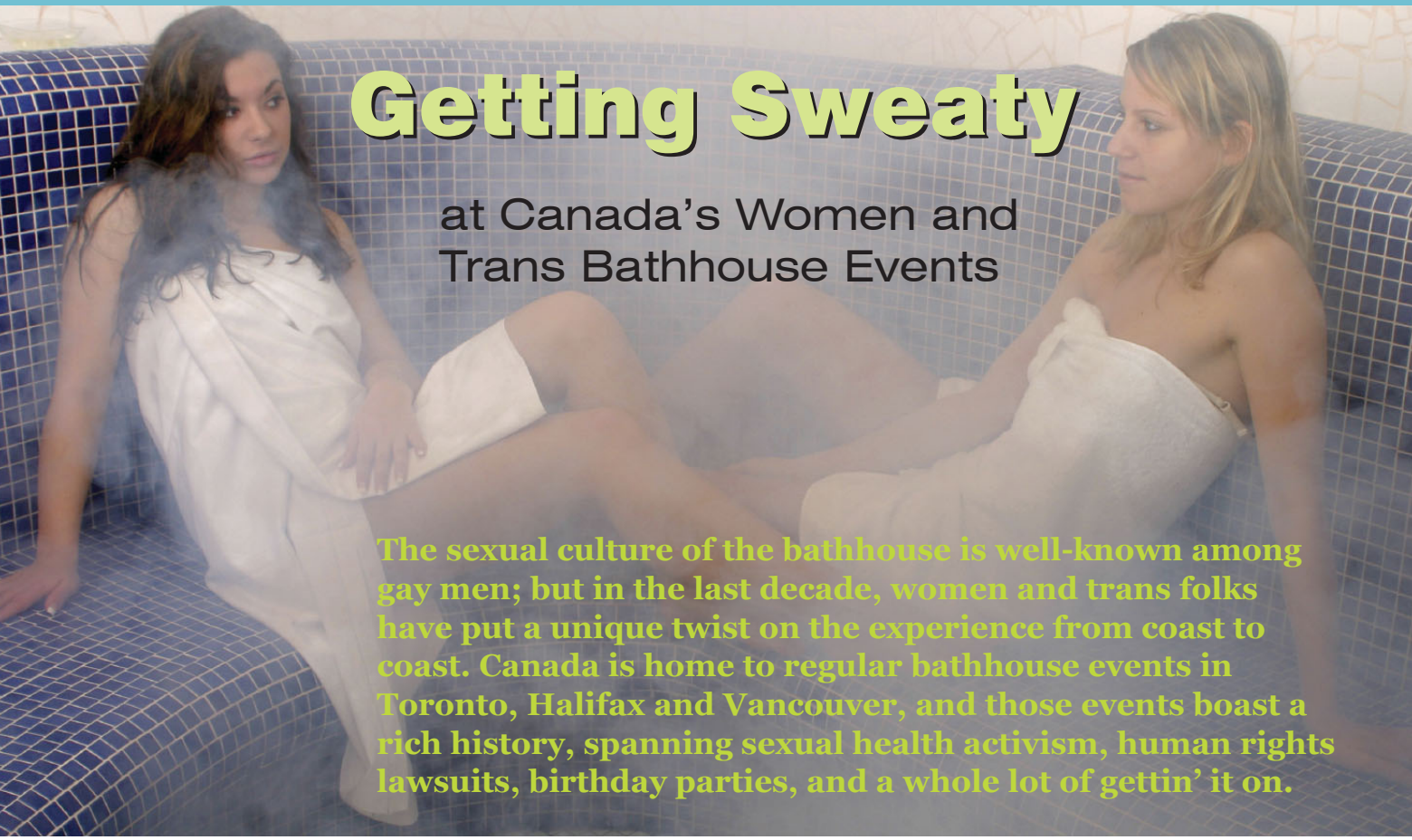
~ ANDREA ZANIN



Getting Sweaty

at Canada's Women and Trans Bathhouse Events

The sexual culture of the bathhouse is well-known among gay men; but in the last decade, women and trans folks have put a unique twist on the experience from coast to coast. Canada is home to regular bathhouse events in Toronto, Halifax and Vancouver, and those events boast a rich history, spanning sexual health activism, human rights lawsuits, birthday parties, and a whole lot of gettin' it on.

Turned On in Toronto

Carlyle Jansen, owner of Toronto sex shop Good For Her, co-founded the Toronto Women and Trans Bathhouse Committee, which celebrated its ten-year anniversary in September, 2008. According to Jansen, the bathhouse event started through the AIDS Committee of Toronto, as a way of talking about safer sex, HIV and STIs.

Jansen remembers the committee's having difficulty finding a bathhouse. "Club Toronto was the first one that came through. They were a bit nervous, asking us, 'Will women be menstruating everywhere? Will there be fights?' They thought, women are monogamous, they'll end up beating each other up."

Next, the committee wondered if anyone would come. "But people came, it was huge. There was a line-up. We weren't prepared; so we had to work out some of the kinks!" Today, the bathhouse is held two to four times a year and draws around 300 people.

"And how were we going to facilitate for people to have sex? It's not necessarily part of our culture," Jansen says. So, they recruited volunteers to encourage the fun. "Now we have a butt playroom, a fisting room, a jerk-off room. There are jail cells, confessionals set up in the glory hole area—people come up with tons of ideas."

The name "Pussy Palace" was soon changed to better welcome trans people.

Then, in September, 2000, police raided the bathhouse, and laid charges against two people.

"We got the charges dropped, because they sent in five male police officers, and women were naked—normally a strip search needs to be done by somebody of the same sex, or you can choose," explains Jansen.

The committee launched a human rights complaint and a class-action lawsuit against the Toronto Police Service, resulting in a $350,000 settlement and mandatory gay and lesbian sensitivity training for the entire force. "We also changed the policy for the search and arrest of trans people. So you can request a different officer for your top search and your bottom search."

As for the event's continued appeal to women and trans people… "We kind of like a party atmosphere, we like a lot of people, a lot of choice," Jansen muses. "And there are differences in how our arousal happens. Some guys are in and out in fifteen minutes, but I think we need a longer evening where we can go, have fun, cruise. But some want to go on all the rides, and that's very satisfying in itself."

Hooking Up in Halifax

Unlike Toronto, in Halifax the bathhouse came to find the dykes, according to Maggie Haywood, owner of Venus Envy sex shop and bathhouse committee co-founder. "Interestingly enough, it was Doug Melanson, the owner of Seadogs Sauna and Spa, who thought this would be a good idea."

Haywood reports that the first attempt, under the name "Dyke Night" in 2004, drew twelve people—and no sex happened. "People didn't know what to expect and so didn't go, or thought they'd see everyone they knew or all their exes, which does happen, but not like ALL of them." However, as they commiserated in the hot tub, the dirty dozen did apparently discuss the event's great potential.

Better explanations of who was welcome (including bi women and trans people) helped boost attendance. "Everyone thinks that the bathhouse is not for them, it's for those people who do crazy public sex things and have amazing bodies," says Haywood. "The truth is that you can pretty much make the experience what you want it to be, and there's a huge range of body types, which is pretty much the best thing about it."

The bathhouse was held five times a year at first; but they've settled on three times annually—Valentine's Day, Pride week, and Halloween—and it boasts a massage room, a make-out room for timed above-the-waist fun, and an erotic reading room. "Other folks do G-spot demos or fisting demos. And silly get-to-know-you games as well."

Haywood reports that average turnout is sixty to seventy, but recent editions have attracted upwards of ninety. “With SheDogs people make a night of it. They show up at the start and stay until they get booted out at the end. Lockers are at a premium, as is hot tub time!”

Diversity, of course, comes up in the conversation. “The problem specific to Halifax is that any sub-population of the queer community is really small,” says Haywood. “Here, where there’s an event, it’s like diversity by default, which is both great and not so great, because there’s definitely something to be said for having your own space, whatever you are.”

“People go to the bathhouse for all kinds of different reasons. There’s definitely the sex and hooking up aspect, but people also go to be in a comfortable space with naked women. There’s something of a social rather than a sexual thing. If we’re doing our job right as organizers, then, ideally, we’re providing all kinds of different spaces and experiences for people to have.”

Vibrations in Vancouver

Vancouver’s yearly bathhouse event, held at Hastings Steam & Sauna, celebrated its fourth anniversary in April. Organizer Kona Katranya explains how it all began.

“The first year, the sad, pathetic story is that my birthday was coming up, and I kinda wanted something to happen; but I didn’t want to rely on anyone else to invite me to dinner.”

So Katranya threw a birthday party, and called it the Sexy Sweaty Kinky Sauna Birthday Party. She reports attendance of twenty-five people the first year. Today, it’s usually seventy or more.

“As a black woman, I come from a culture where women come together once a week and get their hair, nails and beauty care done, and people are naked, and no men are allowed,” says Katranya. “At a bathhouse, there can be that cruising thing that the men’s community is so known for; but it can also be about health, about women taking care of each other.”

Rather than functioning by committee or with the sponsorship of a local sex shop, Vancouver’s bathhouse is run by Katranya alone. “I do recruit a little help in terms of doing the food prep, and [from] my pals setting up the night of. And I have a wonderful dyke who, every single year, does the door, and she does it all night long.”

According to Katranya, “There are more trans people coming all the time. And racial representation could be better but it’s not bad. I’m inclusive by nature and I will do what I can by nature.”

Katranya takes a pared-down, practical view of things. “It’s not rocket science. We’re not fancy. Here’s a sauna. Y’all know what happens there. It’ll be hot and you can be naked. You can watch porn. If you want to do SM that’s okay, and if you wanna have sex, bring it.”

She notes that one well-known local leatherdyke has begun to bring flyswatters and markers. “She likes to draw bugs on people and then swat them. If you’re into that, you can go for it. A group of women last year brought lotions and potions and scrubs, and if you wanted to get lavender scrub on your ass, that’s where you go. But *they* did that. All I did was provide an environment where people could show up and enjoy the space, take possession of the space, and make it what they want.”

Successful? Yes. “This year it was so loud you could hear people coming all the way from the street. It was amaaazing.”

For more info, check out:

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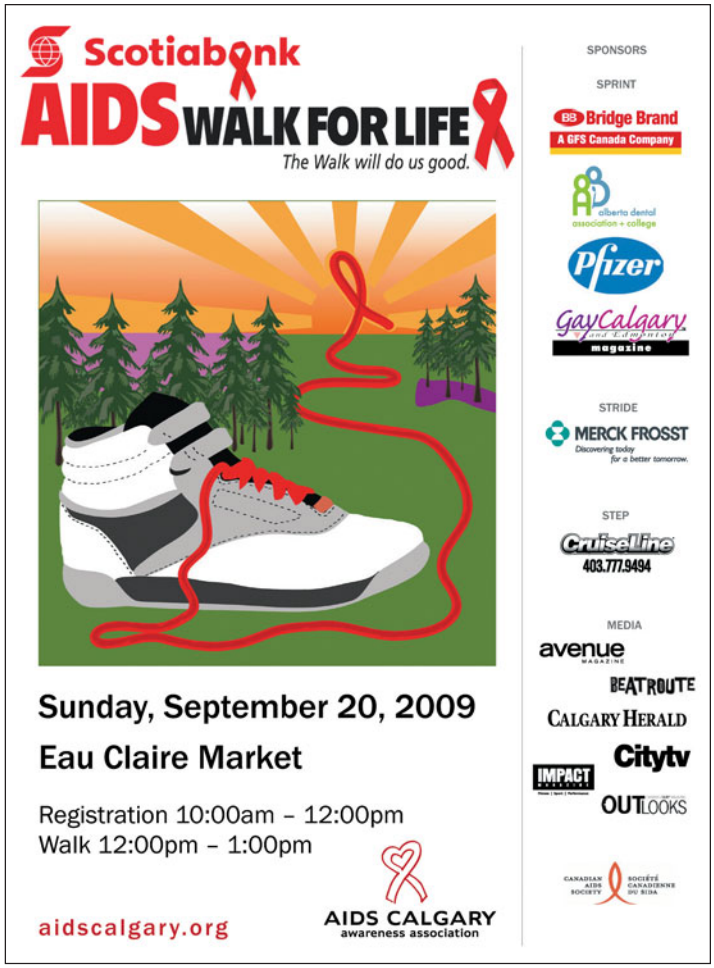


~ LINA HARPER

Technogay's Gadgetry Gallery

It's gadget time, and the latest is the greatest. We homos like to stay connected and finger shiny things from Smartphones to MP3 players to other gadgetry. Here's the hit list:

GPS: TomTom GO 740 Live

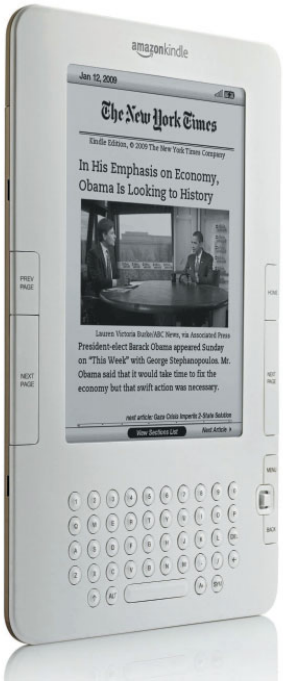
The Tom Tom Club was the best band. Yes, it's true; but this navigation system would be so lucky to leave such a legacy. As a wirelessly connected device, it connects to instant data for Google searching traffic and gas price updates. It also has safety aspects: hands-free Bluetooth calling and voice commands for drivers.

Portable video player: Archos 605 WiFi

With a salacious touch screen, WiFi usability and multiple viewing angles, the Archos 605 is one of the best time-wasters going around. The add-ons will make the price go way up though, but still, it's a nice option for people who travel a lot or get bored in daily life interactions. Dedicated web browser is possible, as is a DVR feature. **Archos 605, starts at $180, www.archos.com**

Phone: Ulysse Nardin's Chairman hybrid Smartphone

Leave the phone charger at home with Ulysse Nardin's latest, a sexy self-charging phone with a rotor providing kinetic energy to power its gorgeous little body. The Swiss watchmakers have been up to this since the 80s (the 1880s!) Seriously, it's so drool. **Chairman hybrid Smartphone: since the phone isn't released as of deadline, no pricing is available, www.uncells.com**



Media reader: Amazon's Kindle DX:

Soon, those physical newspapers are gonna be a thing of the past, like pagers or Pierre Trudeau. Amazon's not sure how to sell subscriptions to papers like The Guardian or the Toronto Star, but they for shizzle want you to spread the wallet cheeks and hand over your cash. The experimental features could make this a must-have – e-books, a "read to me" feature, web browser and MP3 player integration. **Amazon's Kindle DX, about $600, www.amazon.ca**

Laptop: MSI X340

Wired Magazine calls the MSI X340 "a MacBook Air at half the price." The technical specs come close enough to call it a draw (runs on Intel chip, less superior LCD screen) but if you're not a Mac fetishist like me, you'll jump at the low price. **MSI X340, starting at around $950, www.us.msi.com**

Tech review sites that won't bulls**t you:

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~ RYAN SPRING

Circuit Fitness

Summer is in full swing and, of course, there will be the outdoor and indoor summer circuit party events to keep us entertained. From the usual pool parties to boat cruises and—pardon the pun—every affair in between, it's that time of the year when we show off our bodies and dance the night away. Of course, most of us have maintained a consistent workout program throughout the year, and some of us have been working hard for our own version of "buff" for the summer. Chances are that, at some point, we may even take our shirts off and partake in the frenzy. Many of us try to squeeze in a gym routine the day of, or day before, an event, to get that pump on. But, are we maximizing the opportunity and doing it correctly? Not everyone is the prime circuit partier or fitness buff; however, most of us still have it in us to look our very best. I have some excellent workout suggestions for that week prior to the big circuit event that will help **sharpen your whole body in order to present the best overall package possible** (pun intended).

Chances are that you'll know ahead of time which events you may be attending, or perhaps you already have your advanced tickets. Therefore, let me suggest taking the week prior to the event to modify your workout routine and incorporate a well-rounded, full-body defining program that will hopefully help you develop a more ripped look. The concept behind this is simple: put every main body part through a light to medium weight / medium to high rep training session. This will help burn fat, add shape and lean up those body parts you'll be showing off this summer. I like to break this pre-circuit week routine into a three-part process.

First, adapt your usual workout to incorporate full-body exercises. Next, modify your reps and weights to your adapted full full-body plan. Finally, for the last day or two prior to the big party, modify the weight once again, and increase the reps to push out as many reps as you can safely and comfortably perform. This, as I like to call it, is a type of "circuit training for the circuit party."

Ok, let's get started! **Usually, most people already have a workout routine, and most routines focus on a section of the body or two every other day.** For example, Monday might be biceps-and-shoulder day and Wednesday is the chest-and-back day. To begin with, I like to modify my usual program about one week prior to an event by incorporating an overall body workout. Don't do anything too strenuous. Simply reduce the weight-bearing exercises to a much lighter weight and increase the reps. This can be done using free weights or weight machines. I personally prefer the machines for the ease of stability. We now can perform a workout for each body part including chest, biceps, triceps, shoulders, back, legs and (very importantly) the butt. For the first few days of the week prior to the event, perform this overall activity to get your body adjusted to this new short-term routine. This routine doesn't have to be overly strenuous, as we are now focusing on pushing our already trained muscles to an endurance level which helps produce that ripped, lean look.

Photography Harry Leonard

As always, for new workout programs, seek guidance from a qualified personal trainer when you have any doubt as to how to correctly perform the routine.

Now that we have adapted to our new short-term, full-body activities, we can step up our game by increasing the weight. When increasing the weight, we increase the resistance of the activity; but still must be able perform a high number of repetitions somewhere in the range of say, twenty to twenty-five reps. This is done with each body. It not only helps the muscles to adapt to the increase in weight, but it also introduces the muscle to a greater endurance factor and begins the leaning process. I generally perform this training routine for the next couple of days before I incorporate the final stage of my pre-week pump for the big event.

Now for the final adjustment to our training sessions as we are only a day or two out from that party. It's time for phase three. This is the final phase in which we modify the weight in our overall routine and increase our repetitions. **This is the increased endurance phase of our pre-circuit party one-week program. This part of our routine can be fun, yet exhausting, as we are reducing the weight in order to perform a larger number of reps** (approximately thirty or more, depending on your fitness level). For example, if, during the workout sessions prior to these last couple of days, you were doing three sets of twenty reps per body part, you will now be able to reduce the weight in order to perform three sets of approximately thirty reps. This is an endurance zone and helps us to lean out and create a more ripped, sharper look.

I hope that this is helpful to those of you who wish to look your best so that you can take your shirts off or wear those short shorts and feel you've made a valiant attempt to look the part. Boom, boom, boom!

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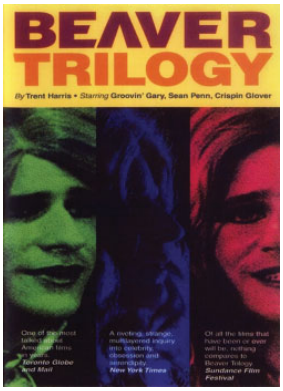
Queer Films, Queer Voices

"As we strive to become the most comprehensive international queer film festival, we hope everyone will find something to love at Inside Out"

The 19th Annual Inside Out Toronto LGBT Film and Video Festival recently wrapped another highly successful stint. And what a creatively charged celebration those ten days turned out to be. From the fest's dynamic lineup of feature, documentary and short films to their special events, fabulous parties and panel discussions—a winning combination of comedy, sex, drama, politics and controversy was on tap for the capacity crowds to enjoy. Gee, did somebody say "capacity?" Yep—and here's why: More than one third of the screenings completely sold out, and this year's overall attendance increased by an impressive six percent. Yahoo!

"As we strive to become the most comprehensive international queer film festival, we hope everyone will find something to love at Inside Out," says Jason St. Laurent, Director of Programming. And since I did find plenty to love, here's the scoop on some of those highlights:

The Beaver Trilogy features rare footage of the remarkably talented Sean Penn, and the endearingly quirky Crispin Glover, both dragged up as gay icon, Olivia Newton-John. I'm not kidding! Although both actors sing tragically off-key, at least they do so with heartfelt sincerity.



Clapham Junction is an edgy, disturbing tale set within an affluent British neighbourhood where discrimination, denial and self-hatred provoke a violent gay bashing, which results in devastating consequences for all. Bravo to this film's inspired casting director for reuniting highly skilled actors James Wilby, Rupert Graves and Phoebe Nicholls, who previously appeared on screen together in the groundbreaking gay film, *Maurice*.

Bernard and Doris showcases Susan Sarandon as billionaire heiress Doris Duke, and Ralph Fiennes as her gay butler Bernard Lafferty in a semi-fictional account of their highly intriguing, very unconventional relationship during her final years. The stars' performances are terrific, as are the film's many unexpected "laugh-out-loud" moments.

Chef's Special dishes up high-strung hilarity at its best! This over-the-top Spanish farce is a madcap romp, wherein the pratfalls are plentiful and the recipes are mouth-watering. This frenzy of silliness will beat your sense of logic into submission faster than you could whip up an omelette.

Antarctica takes a sexy look at the trials and tribulations of modern gay love, turning thirty and escaping repression, with an engaging ensemble cast consisting of some of Israel's most talented gay actors, including Tel Aviv's reigning drag queen, Noam Huberman, who's sure to remind you of a less campy version of the late, great Divine from *Hairspray*.

Make the Yuletide Gay is a Canadian-made holiday gift you'll want to open early. A gay teenager's reluctant coming out takes place among a weird assortment of family, friends and tacky seasonal decorations. Worth the price of admission alone is the caustic performance by our favourite "little bitch on the prairie" Nellie Olsen—a.k.a. Alison Arngrim.

Baby Love has smashed recent box office records in France, and it's easy to see why. This unpredictable yet "très charmant" blend of wry comedy and hard-hitting drama concerns the thorny issue of gays adopting children, when such adoptions are illegal in that country.

Shank's graphic depiction of homophobic gang violence and explicit sex acts is not for the weak-willed. In fact an explosive confrontation scene that takes place among these depraved young men is unforgettably shocking. First-time director, twenty-one year-old Simon Pearce's compelling voice merits keeping tabs on.

Give Me Your Hand displays arty filmmaking at its best. This very accomplished, provocative French film is moving, tender and gripping in its multi-layered simplicity. At its core is a pair of hypnotically gorgeous, identical twin stud-muffins, Victor and Alexandre Carril, who burn up the screen with smoldering intensity. This riveting debut feature, from director Pascal-Alex Vincent, holds the promise of additional commendable works as his artistic vision matures.

An Englishman In New York is a delightful little gem that allows John Hurt an opportunity to reprise his flamboyant portrayal of legendary homosexual rights advocate, author and raconteur Quentin Crisp, at the time when this outspoken pioneer's greatest success and his unfortunate fall from grace are put under the microscope. Swoosie Kurtz and Cynthia Nixon make memorable cameo appearances.

John Hurt as Quentin Crisp

So, until next year when *Inside Out* will celebrate its highly anticipated twentieth anniversary, that's a wrap!

Ask Dr. O:

Dr. Beverly Osachoff, DTCM
Email questions to:
main@outlooks.ca

Dear Dr. O:

Lately, I seem to run out of steam halfway through sex. It starts out good; but somehow things just seem to fizzle… I lose my erection and no amount of coaxing can bring it back. I know it frustrates my partner; but I am too embarrassed to talk about it. Got any ideas?

Fred, Saskatoon

Dear Fred:

When things go dead in bed, use your head.

Acknowledging your impotence is the first step toward solving it. The absolute next thing to do is *see your doctor!* Arrange for an exam ASAP, no excuses! Unfortunately, many men (and their partners) stubbornly suffer in silence. Impotence creates serious strain on relationships and self-esteem, but denial can be deadly. Your uncooperative penis may be simply trying to save your life.

Impotence is common—*all* men experience it sometime, whether brave enough to admit to it or not. Too much booze, certain prescription medications, stress at work, or grieving the loss of a loved one are examples of common causes of *temporary* impotence. However, impotence can be a symptom of a number of serious medical conditions including heart disease, diabetes, and kidney disease. If it happens more than once, find out why!

If all the dangers above have been ruled out, and your health is basically sound, then what? Erections can be induced with drugs like Viagra or Cialis; but of course you have all read my previous article on herbs for potency and "cheap thrills vs. sexual health" (*Outlooks*, March 2009), so you know that a temporary solution is only a temporary solution. Take away the pills and you still have a problem; so how about another perspective?

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) values sexual vitality because it is a major indicator of the state of one's overall health. All the attention paid to expensive tonics, such as ginseng and gecko, stem from the belief that what fuels us sexually is the closest thing there is to the fountain of youth. The resources required for strong sexual function naturally deplete with aging: Your sex drive is different at 24 and 84. Sorry. Keeping these factors abundant also shows positively in one's vitality, skin, and mental faculties; so you can see why these medicines are so highly prized in many cultures.

These primary vital resources, often translated as *"essence"* are considered to be housed in the kidneys for distribution throughout the body as "undifferentiated structive potential," or the basic "building blocks" our bodies need. These discreet substances decline with aging, and can be eroded by serious illness, smoking, traumatic injury, drug abuse, or *excessive* sexual activity (yes, masturbation counts). Taxation, due to strenuous overwork or emotional stress, also causes depletion. Treatment typically includes diet improvements, rest, herbal medicines and acupuncture treatments. When stress is a factor, lifestyle changes might include finding healthy ways to decompress—take a fly fishing class, or sign up for a Tai Chi course. The couch can't help you.

A wise friend once told me that there is nothing sexier than the sound of your lover's voice. I say especially when your lover is amorous and ready to rock! So, what about your lover? Are you happy together? Impotence can be a sign of unspoken spite toward your mate, and it can be a sign of depression, worry, or fear. If you can't talk to each other, your relationship needs repair work on more than one level, Fred. Restful vacations together have done wonders for many couples, and so have counselors. Consider both, if you can.

In a few cases, impotence can present with a sweaty scrotum, bitter taste in the mouth, premature ejaculation, dark coloured urine, and mild agitation. This type of impotence is readily treated with herbs and acupuncture but it is less common. You still need to see a doctor to rule out STDs or infection.

Don't be shy about this, Fred. Talk to your Doc, and
too. If you are young enough to worry about impotence, yo
to do something about it. Get well soon!

QUICK TRICKS

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~ KEVIN ALDERSON, Ph.D., R. Psych.

Couch Talk –
The Musings of a Psychologist

The Truth About Gay Cock

I have always known there is something bigger than the *whistle dog* sold by that local fast food chain. In fact, I have seen bigger ones on the street, juicy hot ones at those stands that roll away into the mist after dark.

Besides that, there is the simple bravado that comes from being gay. Are we more likely to have quarter pounders as compared to our envious heterosexual brothers? The simple truth is "yes." (I write that while I slurp back something that has frozen strawberries in it.) Stay with me for some interesting research that looks at the truth about gay cock.

As some of you know, Kinsey and his colleagues interviewed thousands of American men before they had their book published in 1948. The Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction continued their interviews after that, and so the current study–published in 1999–reports on combined data from 1938 to1963. The original Kinsey study was heavily criticized for having too many criminals in it. (Maybe Kinsey had a fantasy about prison sex.) Regardless, two researchers took out the criminals from the Kinsey sample and added them to others without criminal records. The result: a sample of 5,122 men ages 18 and older, with 935 classified as homosexual and 4,187 classified as heterosexual. To be classed as homosexual, you had to have more than twenty male sexual partners or more than fifty homosexual experiences with one or more partners (don't worry–you probably qualify). Heterosexual men had to report either no or rare homosexual experience (one male sex partner and/or no more than one-to-five homosexual experiences, otherwise known as the "have nots").

For those of you who are Kinsey followers (some of you saw the movie about him), Kinsey and his colleagues interviewed men about their sexual experiences. What some of you didn't know is that they also asked about penis size (can you imagine not asking that if you are gay?). They wanted the following information: (a) estimated erect penis length, (b) measured flaccid penis length, (c) measured erect penis length, (d) measured flaccid penis circumference, and (e) measured erect penis circumference. The Kinsey researchers did not ask the interviewees to pull out their cocks so they could measure them, which actually would have been the most accurate way to find this out (and a lot more fun I suspect). No, if they had been medically-trained people, they might have been able to do that as a medical doctor did in a 1961 study (that doctor found the same results, by the way). Instead, they asked the men to measure their dicks after the interview and to mail in their results (even Publisher's Clearing House was envious about how quickly this mail was opened).

After controlling statistically for height, weight, and education (not sure how this one would have any effect, actually), they found what you might have already suspected: gay men reported having bigger cocks, whatever way you want to look at them. The authors did not publish charts actually showing the distribution of penis lengths or circumferences (nor did they include actual pictures, which must have been an oversight). So, that led a guy by the name of Krisel to suggest that perhaps a few really big gay men were responsible for these findings. (I have tried to find their phone numbers and addresses, to no avail.) The authors responded to him by saying that this was not the case, thereby strengthening their argument that gay men actually do have larger pricks than straight men.

An alternate explanation is that gay men lie more about their penis size; but I actually doubt that is the case. More recent research (published in 2008) actually reveals that heterosexual men worry more about penis size than do gay men, although naturally both groups want larger penises (if only straight men could *have* them). Gay men also want to be thinner and more muscular, which is consistent with research showing that we are especially susceptible to idolizing the ideal male body (which is unattainable for most men, by the way–serious about this one).

Other interesting research with 294 Latino gay men in New York shows that the likelihood of whether they adopt an insertive or receptive role in oral and anal sex is partially contingent on the size of the other guy's cock. The guy with the biggest cock gets to be the inserter (yes) and the guy with the smaller cock gets to become the bottom (ouch). I am sure such cock wars occur not only with Latinos in New York (if I am wrong, show me yours and we will see!).

Now the serious stuff: Who really cares about cock size? (Okay, I can't believe I am writing this.) But really? The reason is that if gay men have bigger cocks, or smaller ones for that matter, there may well be some prenatal hormonal factors at work, thereby strengthening the essentialist explanation for why we turned out this way. The fact is, we still do not know why some people turn out gay and others turn out regrettably or pathetically straight. Most researchers suspect it results from a combination of biopsychosocial factors (another way of saying we really don't know).

In another column, I will provide another potential biologic link: Are we in fact more likely to be left-handed than heterosexuals, regardless of whether we are gay men or lesbian women? Right now I don't care about that. I take solace in knowing that, as a gay man, my search for big cock is not misaligned or disproportionate to my hunger. So, "where's the beef, Beefcake?" Obviously this month it is between your legs.

Kevin Alderson can be contacted by confidential email at **alderson@ucalgary.ca**, or by confidential voice mail at 403-605-5234.

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Mistress Manners

Dear Mistress Manners:

Thanks for your awesome column. You've mentioned poly relationships a couple of times and I want to know more about open relationships. Do they actually work? My partner and I have been together for nine years. We have two kids and we own a house together; but she never wants to have sex anymore. We're comfortable, but I guess we've been suffering from that famous lesbian bed death. I'm lonelier than ever. I miss being touched. I would love to find a woman I could just have sex with. There seems to be too much at stake in ending my relationship; but I'm afraid I don't have another nine years in me, if things keep going like this.

~ Not Getting Any

Dear Not Getting Any:

Unfortunately, sexual desire can fluctuate a lot, especially in long-term, live-in relationships. It's not just a lesbian thing. It's easy to overlook sex in the package of undoubtedly wonderful qualities that your partner brings to your life.

To answer your question, open relationships can work. Mistress Manners has seen many functionally unconventional relationships last for years— even decades. Creative, complicated people organize their personal relationships in creative and complicated ways.

But, before you embark on a journey that could put your otherwise peaceful home at risk, here are some thoughts to consider. Opening up a relationship when you're in the midst of a sexual lull is not necessarily the best idea. It depends on how you got to the lull. Did you two wind up in a slump because you're both leading tiring and busy lives of co-parenting and domesticity? Could it be that what the two of you need is a vacation together? Or does your loneliness stem from something more?

I ask because it sounds like you've compartmentalized a little. If sex is all you're looking to gain by opening up your relationship, maybe a better idea would be to explore how you can enhance sexual contact in your present relationship. Or, if you're really feeling that you have one foot out the door, then it's important to open the lines of communication with your partner so that she realizes what you're going through. There's nothing worse than an abrupt and surprising break-up in which she has not had the opportunity to change her behaviour, and you have not expressed your needs properly. You will both walk away angry and frustrated, which is not a good situation for co-parents to be in.

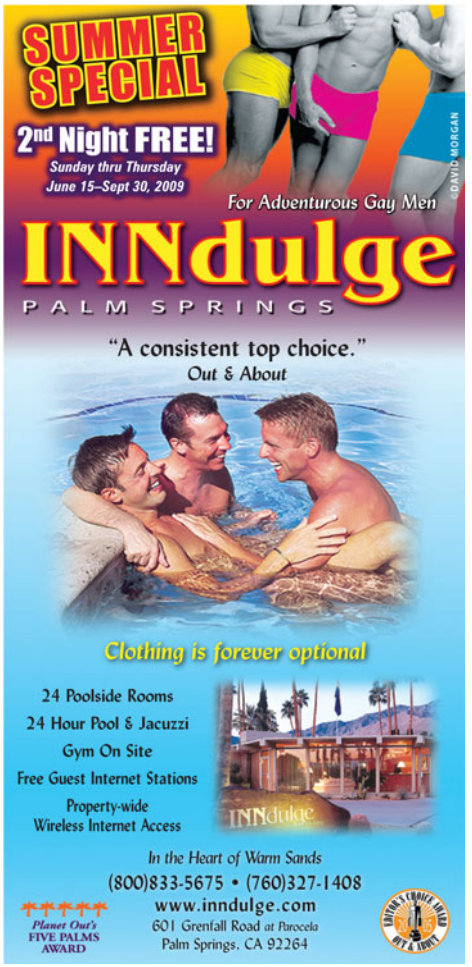
On top of that, there are very few women who will just want sex and it doesn't sound likely that your partner will see what you have with another woman as "just sex." Even the most flighty and flirty little tryst is something you should discuss with your partner, if you value her. There's more to locking lips than locking lips, if you know what I mean.

Now, let it be said that Mistress Manners is pro-poly. I'm also aware that many people enter into poly agreements as a way to avoid dealing with potentially painful issues, like no longer feeling attracted to your spouse or, perhaps, no longer feeling in love (a word that was conspicuously missing from your letter). So, my dear, you'd best be doing a little more emotional digging. There's nothing wrong with expressing to your partner that you need more sex or more affection. If she, indeed, is someone you wish to stay with, include her in your process.

Beyond the radical shift in moral judgment, poly relationships require a whole lot of honesty and self-awareness. Make sure you're there first, before you do anything rash.

Please contact Mistress Manners with your questions at:
mistressmanners@gmail.com

Travel & Accommodation



~ ROBERT SHARP

Finding Gay Peru

Peru started growing on me before I even boarded the plane. The cute Peruvian check-in agent sensed that we were "family" and went out of his way to share his favourite spots in Lima with us: Café Café, just off the main square, is his favourite place to people watch, while Café Haiti offers an unobstructed view of the main traffic circle in Lima's posh Miraflores neighbourhood.

Pisac market

Machu Picchu

Bicycle cart in Huaras

Cloud people

Group in remote farming community

Arriving in Lima, we met our group of nine: four Americans, three Canadians, a Brit and a Peruvian (our gay local leader, Sebastian). The benefit of travelling with a gay leader is that we not only tour the fabulous areas of Lima but also have an insider to show us the gay hotspots such as Lola Lounge (various theme nights for Lesbians and Gays) and Downtown Club (formerly known as Valetoto) where all the locals go to shake their *thang*, often until after 4 a.m.!

Adios, Lima, and on to the city of Cusco, known for its cobblestone streets and original Inca construction. This stunning city is also a haven for adventurers and luxury travellers alike. At approximately 3,300 meters (10,800 feet) above sea level, Cusco serves as a main hub for trekking trips and tours to the famed Machu Picchu. The history of Cusco is an interesting one. Once the capital of the Incan Empire, it was conquered by the Spaniards, beginning in 1533. However, demolition proved impossible for the Spanish, leading them to construct a new city on the very foundation of the Inca ruins.

Modern-day Cusco has something for everyone, from quaint cafes and hidden plazas to great restaurants such as Baco (Ruinas 465, Cusco), specializing in wine and modern Peruvian cuisine, and the well-known Fallen Angel (Plazoleta Nazarenas 221, Cusco). This gay owned and operated resto-lounge features modern art and décor, including glass tables supported by bathtubs filled with goldfish. The wait staff isn't too hard on the eyes either!

After exploring Cusco, it's on to the Lares Valley, where we start a challenging three-day trek through the Andes. Early on day one, we are joined by a mountain dog who we think has wandered from home. We nickname him Pumpkin and he follows us along the entire trek, only adding to the comradery.

Our journey peaks at 4,400 meters (14,500 feet) above sea level on day two of the trek. The views are spectacular, the sense of accomplishment huge. Our local guide David (not gay but VERY welcoming) has us participate in a ritual to pay tribute to the Andean gods. Followed by group hugs, this is a "heart to heart" as David says, and for myself a silent moment to reflect—and tear up a bit.

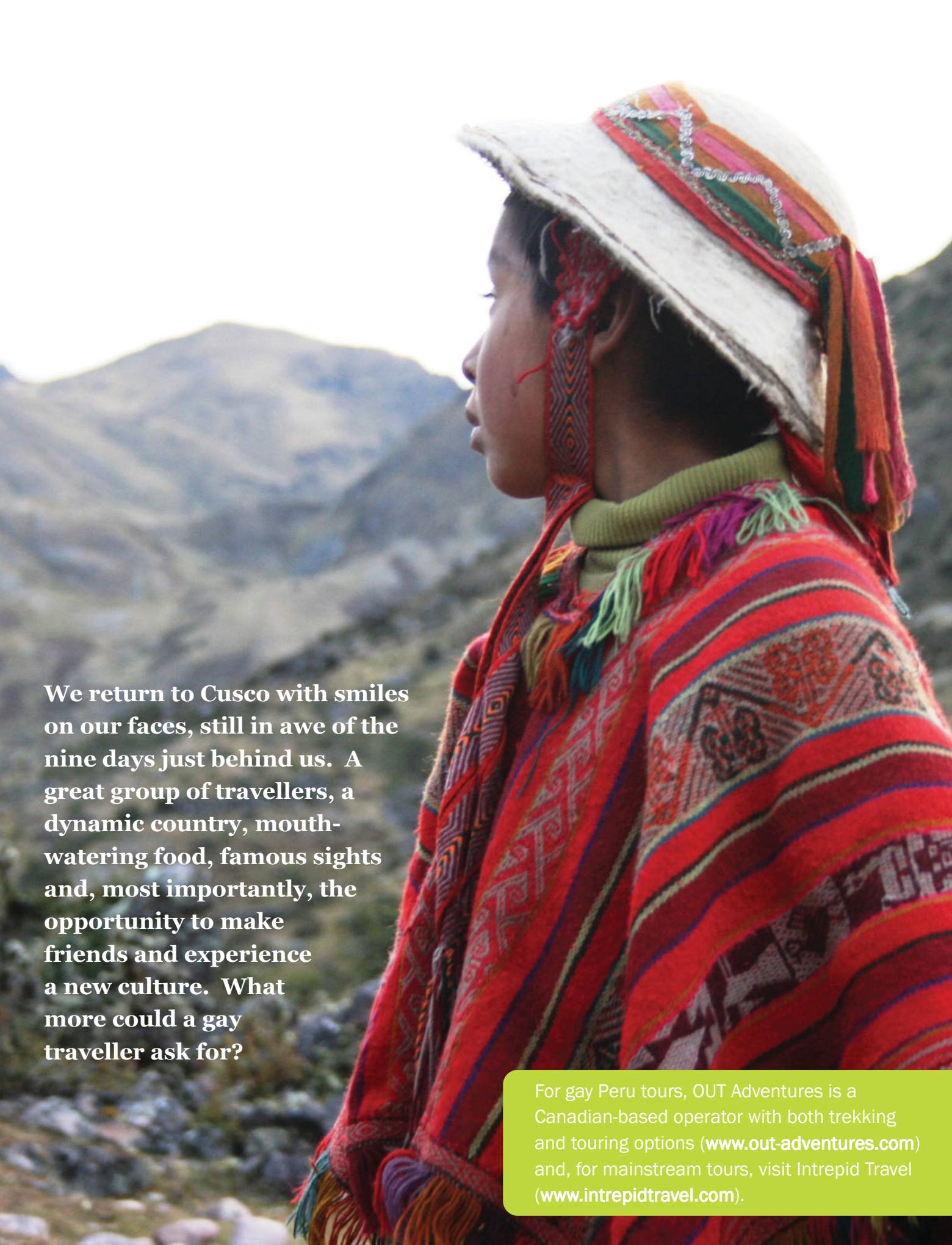
Most travellers know only of the Inca Trail, but the Lares Trek offers a different perspective of this wonderful country. On the less-touristy Lares Trek, hikers are given the opportunity to see how the Quechua people of the countryside live - which is, in many ways, no different from hundreds of years ago! They survive on the land, live in homes built of stone or mud, and even wear somewhat traditional attire. Children (outside of school hours) often greeted our group looking for apples or pencils, which we are recommended to carry along the trek. This is a truly unique opportunity that hikers on the more crowded Inca Trail do not experience. Simply amazing!

We camp under the stars, and stars there certainly are. I stretch out on a large boulder by the river one night with a fellow traveller to reflect and discuss the trip thus far. Within a half hour, we spot five shooting stars - one so bright that it lights the sky, enabling us to see the silhouettes of the surrounding mountains. After making our wishes (I'm a bit superstitious), we bundle up and hunker down in our tents for the cold night.

Our Lares journey should have come to an end mid-morning on day three, but a peaceful local farmers' strike blocked some nearby roads, forcing us to trek along a highway for a few additional hours. All part of the adventure, this ends up becoming a highlight of the trek with Pumpkin (our fearless canine friend) defending the group by chasing passing motorcycles along the way.

We eventually make it to Aguas Calientes, the nearest town to Machu Picchu, where we board a bus to take us along the winding twenty-five-minute ride to our final and ultimate destination—Machu Picchu, or "Old Peak." This is what we came for. This is it. There is but one cloud in the sky, smiles are contagious, and cameras start flashing. Pictures just don't do justice to this magical place. Once home to an estimated 500 Incans, Machu Picchu took over 100 years to build, and was not even complete when it was abandoned. Like much of this region, the grounds today are still maintained by Alpaca, an animal that resembles a small llama. After fully exploring the citadel, we have the opportunity to climb Wayna Picchu, or "Young Peak." for an almost aerial view of the sacred site below.

Hiking Lares



We return to Cusco with smiles on our faces, still in awe of the nine days just behind us. A great group of travellers, a dynamic country, mouth-watering food, famous sights and, most importantly, the opportunity to make friends and experience a new culture. What more could a gay traveller ask for?

For gay Peru tours, OUT Adventures is a Canadian-based operator with both trekking and touring options (**www.out-adventures.com**) and, for mainstream tours, visit Intrepid Travel (**www.intrepidtravel.com**).

Travel Editor Randall Shirley went to Stratford, Ontario, to see a legendary show or two. What he discovered is a "cast" of locals that might make Stratford...

The Gayest Small Town in Canada

canadian travel

~ RANDALL SHIRLEY

If the lineups outside the York Street Kitchen sandwich shop are any indicator, Susie Palach may be the most popular woman in Stratford.

Just a few blocks away, when the final curtain drops on the Avon Theatre stage, the wildly cheering fans could lead one to believe that Bruce Dow is the town's most popular man.

Their respective fans (some of whom may be fans of both) may not all realize it, but Suzie and Bruce are two of the most *out* gays in the hamlet (where, it happens, *Hamlet* plays from time to time).

Susie's sandwiches are not *quite* as famous as the legendary Stratford Theatre Festival where Bruce has become a much-loved player. But one bite of her lovingly made Mennonite farmer's sausage sandwich made my taste buds dance. The fillings are piled on homemade white bread that would make every granny of bygone eras proud.

While a sandwich may seem a simple thing, in Stratford, a town of about 30,000 just two hours' drive from Toronto, even a sandwich shop turns into a piece of divine theatre, with Susie's pull-you-in-and-love-you-personality in the lead role.

Susie has made Stratford's favourite sandwiches for 22 years—having trained at the gay-owned Stratford Chef's School (as seen on Food Network), but discovered she has a knack for baking bread and serving up classic lunches—slow food *before* it was hip. She and her partner Cindy are raising a daughter together. When asked her how their daughter handles the "two moms" questions at school, Susie laughs and explains for a recent school project she wrote a report on drag queens. Apparently she handles it well!

Susie will also tell you that, despite being smack in the middle of relatively conservative farm country, Stratford is *very* GLBT-friendly. In fact, the town is crawling with gays and lesbians who run B&Bs, galleries, and restaurants.

Not to mention the gays who are a vital part of the vaunted theatre festival. Bruce Dow is probably the most visible gay in Stratford's theatre world, but many more—including Dow's partner Stephen Barber, who is Head House Manager for the festival—work tirelessly on-stage and off.

Despite loving the musical theatre genre, I initially resisted getting a ticket to Stratford's 2008 version of *Cabaret,* as I've seen many productions of the gay-important show, and simply didn't believe Stratford could match the powerful 1996 Broadway revival version. "You haven't seen *our Cabaret* with Bruce Dow as Emcee," a Festival staffer said as I tried to make my final ticket decisions. Ok. *Wilkommen* to the world of wildly-talented Bruce Dow.

Bruce accomplished something I didn't think possible: he made the character of Emcee in *Cabaret* more sexually twisted, bizarre and emotionally dazzling than even the great Alan Cumming. At curtain call, the audience reaction was nothing short of raucous adoration. (See Bruce as Pseudolous in the 2009 production of *A Funny Thing… Forum).*

I've seen a lot of great Stratford shows over the years, and while waiting at the Avon Theatre's stage door to shake Bruce's hand, I realize that most every Stratford production is on-par—and sometimes above—what I regularly see in downtown Toronto or on Broadway. Stratford's 2003 production of *The King & I* still rings strong in my memory.

The town boasts a lot of B&Bs, but theatre lovers couldn't ask for better than a bed at

The Three Houses, a lovely collection of brick homes where owner David Lester is a host *bon vivant*. David knows just about every actor who's ever been through Stratford, and he loves welcoming travellers each morning, serving up quiche and listening in as they discuss the shows they saw the day before. Most of the guests are well-heeled, well-educated, and straight (but I didn't find any of them narrow). There is no gay-exclusive B&B in town.

Nor, semi-surprisingly, is there a GLBT bar. Gay Stratforders make do with a cosy bistro/bar called Down The Street. If you're lucky, David will be keen to join you there for dinner, and you couldn't ask for better company. I was also lucky enough to join Richard Maloney there for late night libations.

Richard and his partner Jim Morris own one of Canada's more unusual hospitality spots: Rundles Restaurant & Morris House B&B, smack on the bank of the Stratford River. While the dining experience at Rundles is fine—indeed it's been ranked by foodies among Canada's finest—tony Morris House is their *piéce de resistance*. Bring your rich friends, as sleeping surrounded with modern art and furnishings by Le Corbusier, Frank Gehry, Richard Roblin in a house designed by *haute* Toronto architects Shim-Sutcliffe, does come at an appropriate price.

Stratford's daytime diversions are many. A stroll along the river parkway is an elegant choice—you can practically hear Saint-Saens' music as the swans glide on the river's surface alongside teams from local rowing clubs. You can shop at The Green Room—a very fun, multi-purpose costume/card/everything store. Or you can make friends with Alan Watts at his inviting garden shop, Anything Grows. The name, of course, is derived from the musical last seen on the Stratford stage in 2004. Alan's a bit shy at first but he opens up to reveal that his partner was once his customer. Apparently shopping's good in Stratford!

No matter what you do in Stratford, if you're anything like me, you'll come away a big, big fan of the gays & lesbians who help make the place so unique. And we haven't even mentioned the friendly non-gays!

Now, I wonder if Susie's sandwiches are available by mail order?

Photo: Randall Shirley

Susie Palach's sandwiches are legendary—and she's a blast to talk with! Say hi.

The Details

Get There: Via Rail has fast, easy service from Toronto and Windsor. The closest major airport is London, Ontario.

Stay: All are gay-owned and operated.

- The Three Houses B&B, 100 Brunswick St., 519-272-0722 www.thethreehouses.com
- Morris House B&B, 9 Cobourg Street, 519-271-6442 www.rundlesrestaurant.com/MorrisHouse.htm
- Houghson Hall B&B, 220 Hibernia St., 519-305-0780
- A Hundred Church St. B&B, 100 Church St., 519-272-8845 www.ahundredchurchst.ca

Eat:

- York Street Kitchen, 41 York St., 519-273-7041 www.yorkstreetkitchen.com
- Down the Street, 30 Ontario St., 519-273-5886 www.downthest reet.ca
- Rundles Restaurant *(see "Stay")*
- Bijou *(not mentioned in story; gay-friendly, out-standing value)*, 105 Erie St., 519-273-5000 www.bijourestaurant.com

Play:

- Stratford Festival of Canada www.stratfordfestival.ca
- Anything Grows, 235 St Patrick St., 519-272-1100 www.anythinggrows.com
- The Green Room, 40 Ontario St., 519-271-3240

Photo : David How/Stratford Festival

Actor Bruce Dow has become a Stratford icon, redefining roles like Cabaret's emcee. This season he appears in Sondheim's Funny thing... Forum, *it's bound to be a zinger.*

~ DARRIN HAGEN

Pink Monday

It's one of the largest events in Germany—picture Oktoberfest, but in July. Nestle it on the banks of the Rhine. Add an amusement park that rivals any modern midway. Now, add millions of people over eight days. And then, on the first Monday, stir in 50,000 gays and lesbians, and you have Pink Monday, one of the oldest traditions in Germany's festival season, and a completely unique event for the queer festivalgoer.

"The Largest Fair on the Rhine" (or "Rheinkirmes") is a 500-year-old tradition that rivals the famed Oktoberfest—in fact, it is 200 years older than the kitschy beerfest, with roots that go back to 1316, when a celebration of the anniversary of St. Apollinaris, Duesseldorf's patron saint, was started by the local shooting club. It soon became an annual event, and despite the conservative and religious beginnings of the festival, it has always been known as a free-thinking, live-and-let-live atmosphere. Not only that, but Rheinkirmes is, first and foremost, a family event—making it a fascinating addition to the list of international Queer events.

Even more unique is the fact that the involvement of the queer community at the Rhine Fair was never spearheaded or initiated by any group or organization—and yet somehow, they are celebrating the 20th Anniversary of Pink Monday.

So how did such a long-standing celebration become a magnet for the Queer community? According to festival organizers, "The LGBTQ involvement in the fair grew organically. The Rhine Fair is the kind of event that attracts everyone—very much like Disneyland—but, most of all, it defines a time when it is acceptable to celebrate as you are. Germans are known to be able to relax during the carnival, and suddenly a whole city of people who adhere to rules and established structures all year long, go wild and let go, not only of their own inhibitions and social boundaries, but of others, in sort of a collective 'letting go' and an expression of individuality—to heal the psyche and be able to function as a rather homogenous society the rest of the year."

The nature of the fair offers this same kind of environment: It allows people to be how they want to be, and in this pocket of acceptance, Pink Monday grew quite naturally. Sometimes LGBTQ groups are involved in organizing aspects of Pink Monday; but they are not instrumental in keeping the event going. They just piggyback!

And, despite the religious origins of the carnival, there has been no resistance or official statement against the participation of the LGBTQ community in the fair or the development of Pink Monday as part of the fair."

In an atmosphere like this, Pink Monday cannot help but build empathy and understanding between diverse communities.

It's probably accurate to say that both feed each other: the growing acceptance of gays and lesbians over the years in general facilitates the growth of Pink Monday as an event. And, in turn, the higher visibility at Pink Monday paves the way for more acceptance, sort of like a constant feedback loop spiraling upwards. There is no doubt, however, that a day of relaxed celebration among such huge numbers of people can do wonders for opening up people's minds, both as individuals and as a society. Gay and straight people dancing together at Pink Monday can break down barriers faster than many discussions with dividing lines between parties could ever do. The one thing that everyone seems to understand very well is that gays and lesbians put on an amazing party on Pink Monday, and you'd better show up for it and leave your hang-ups at home if you want to have a good time!

The comparisons to Disneyland's annual Gay Day is unavoidable, and yet Pink Monday has the enviable history of just occurring naturally, as opposed to being fought for by queer-rights groups, or being launched by a corporate entity talking the talk of equality. But both honour the same goals—embracing diversity.

Gay Day at Disneyland is an official annual gay and lesbian event held at an amusement park and inclusive of everyone else that wants to be there during that time. Pink Monday is exactly that, just one day only. And, as in Disneyland, the amusement park aspect should not be underestimated as part of the entertainment: The fair features some of the world's biggest portable rides, along with 350 vendors and booths.

There are some queer-specific entertainment moments at Pink Monday; but it's more about welcoming the Queer visitors into a family festival.

One of the beer tents is turned into a space for gay and lesbian performances for Pink Monday. Admission is €7.50, and performances include drag shows and dancing. Outside the tent, it's gays and straights mixing and enjoying the fair, while many of the 350 vendors decorate their booths with pink and rainbow-colored balloons and other things.

In a world where Queer fun is often relegated to the sidelines, or kept separate, Pink Monday shows us a whole new way to celebrate our pride.

The "Rheinkirmes" carnival 2009 takes place July 18-26, with Pink Monday on July 20. For further info, check out **www.duesseldorf-tourismus.de** and **www.visitduesseldorf.de**.

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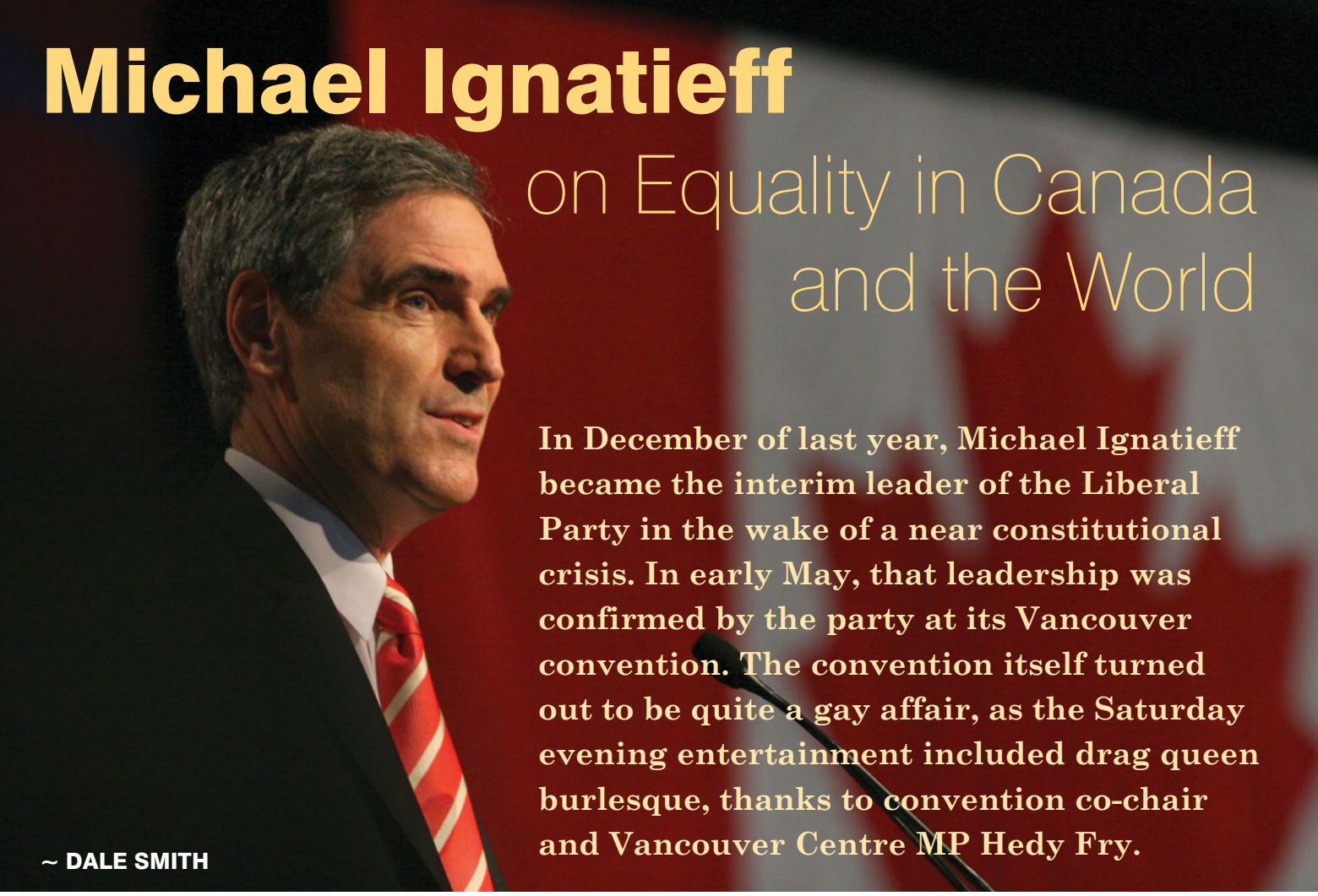
Michael Ignatieff on Equality in Canada and the World



In December of last year, Michael Ignatieff became the interim leader of the Liberal Party in the wake of a near constitutional crisis. In early May, that leadership was confirmed by the party at its Vancouver convention. The convention itself turned out to be quite a gay affair, as the Saturday evening entertainment included drag queen burlesque, thanks to convention co-chair and Vancouver Centre MP Hedy Fry.

~ DALE SMITH

Ignatieff, a former journalist, broadcaster, filmmaker, human rights advocate and Harvard professor, has indeed spent many years abroad; but it has given him a great respect for the way in which things happen in Canada—especially when it comes to the GLBT community.

"I marched in the Parade in Toronto three times, and in Vancouver at least once," Ignatieff says. "It was great. They're great festivals. I think both the Toronto and Vancouver ones are an example of something that is beyond praise. That is, Pride days that began as the defence of the rights of one group have become celebrations of the diversity of whole communities, and that's an extraordinary achievement. Really amazing, in fact."

"When you look at the crowds who come out to gay pride, there are people from every race, religion, community and sexual orientation. They all identify with a cause that used to be the cause of a persecuted minority, and that's an amazing achievement," Ignatieff says. "It doesn't mean we're home and dry, it doesn't mean that all is right with the world; but it does mean that gay and lesbian Canadians have led the fight for a more decent society. Pride day looks like a day in which we celebrate together, and it's the togetherness of it that I think touches everyone that takes part."

Ignatieff speaks passionately about being the leader of the "party of the Charter," and about that commitment to human rights. His caucus also has the largest gay representation in Parliament, with three openly gay MPs and one senator in the ranks. And yet for Ignatieff, sexuality is something that borders on irrelevance.

"I count gay and lesbian Canadians as friends and colleagues, and I stand with them, and I want to wish everyone happy Pride."

"What I care about in the caucus is courage, competence and hard work," he says. "I'm uninterested in the sexual orientation in my fellow caucus members and members of my party, except insofar as they speak for and on behalf of any Canadian who is excluded and mistreated; but I think we're all working to a world where we're together. Completely together. And we've got a ways to go."

"I'm tremendously proud of the role that my party played in, for example, the gay marriage issue. I feel that we took a decision that was difficult. We paid a political price for it, and I think we will be judged well by history for having made a difficult decision, and made the right decision. We achieved a landmark victory for gay and lesbian Canadians, and a victory that stands in quite marked contrast to south of the border where your brothers and sisters are still fighting for the rights that we've achieved here. That's something I'm very proud of in Canada."

And yet, being the leader of a "big tent" party has its challenges. It wasn't so long ago that there was a vocal "God Squad" within the Liberal party, and one of Paul Martin's cabinet ministers quit over same-sex marriage.

"As a political leader, I don't get to choose whom I represent," Ignatieff stresses. "I have to represent people who strongly support gay marriage, and people who oppose gay marriage. I have to support people who are comfortable with, or who simply find people's sexual orientation irrelevant, and I have to represent people for whom it is an issue. That's what a democracy is. My job as a leader is to stand clearly on

behalf of gay and lesbian Canadians, but also to reach out to those who still have difficulty with those issues. I have no choice about that. I have to serve both communities, both groups, and that's the challenge. We're one country, we're one people, and we have to live together. As I said earlier about the gay pride parade, what is so heartening and encouraging about this is we're building bridges. It's just great."

At home, Ignatieff says his commitment to leading the party of the Charter means engaging with gay and lesbian stakeholders to see that their needs are being met.

"My sense is the issue is always one of equality. The issue is always one of equal rights," he says. "The issue is always then making sure that equality in law is translated into equality in action and equality in respect."

"In cases where stakeholders show you where the shoe is pinching, where equality in law is not equality in fact, then a responsible and compassionate government has to act and has to act quickly. In other words, if there's some new frontier of exclusion and inequality of which we're unaware, then we consult with our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters, and we say what do we need to do? I have good contacts within that community—always have and always will—[including] members of my own caucus."

One example of a means to ensure that equality in law becomes equality in practice is the reinstatement of the Court Challenges Programme, which has been instrumental for groups like EGALE in bringing equality cases to court.

"Well, there's no question," Ignatieff says. "The Conservatives cut the Court Challenges Programmes, and then reintroduced it solely for language rights cases, as I understand it, and we strongly disagree with that. We think that there needs to be a Court Challenges Programme for every community who has to defend their rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms—every community, and that includes obviously the gay and lesbian community."

But while things are on the right track at home, Ignatieff's experience abroad has shown him that there is a lot of work to be done internationally.

"I think of gay rights as human rights, and I think of them in an international dimension," Ignatieff says. "I vividly remember, for example, going to Iran in 2005 and meeting young Iranian men who faced detention, faced violence, faced total social exclusion because of their sexual orientation. All I can say is they looked very frightened, and I don't like to see fear in anybody's face."

"I understand that, internationally, we have a long way to go before gay human beings have the equality that international human rights instruments promise, that people in Iran were so frightened that they wouldn't even give me their names. We have to stand for equality at home, but we also have to stand for it internationally, and that's a complicated matter. You have to engage in sustained, serious dialogue with these regimes, with the cultures and with the religions. You have to express respect for these cultures, these religions and these faiths, but you also have to be very clear that there are international standards to which all cultures and all communities should subscribe."

Toronto Pride

Another recent example has been in Moscow, where police cracked down on a gay pride demonstration, and to date, Canada has been silent on what went on.

"I think it's a shame," Ignatieff says. "I think a Liberal government would not be silent. Because I've been in international human rights for a long time, I know that international signals from respected governments like Canada are very encouraging, and give courage to activists in other countries who feel often alone, and feel no one cares, and no one's watching—and no one's watching after them. Especially those who end up in prison. Some people were imprisoned as a result of that demonstration, and they don't want to feel that there's no one watching them."

For reasons like these, Ignatieff recognizes the importance of documents like the Montréal Declaration, that came out of the Outgames in 2006.

"It's clearly in line with the commitments that the party has made as the party of the Charter," he says.

Given Ignatieff's work in broadcasting, journalism, human rights and commitment to the GLBT cause internationally, it should come as little surprise that he's always been comfortable with the community.

"Gay and lesbian Canadians have been friends and colleagues all my working life – all my life," Ignatieff says. "I don't think there's any moment when some light went on. It's been part of the landscape of my world for a long time."

"I count gay and lesbian Canadians as friends and colleagues, and I stand with them, and I want to wish everyone happy Pride."

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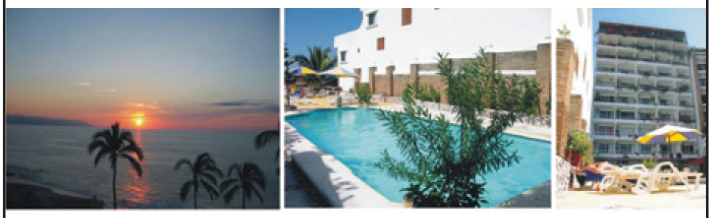

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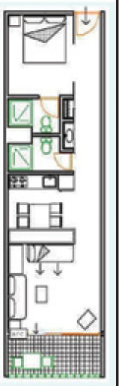

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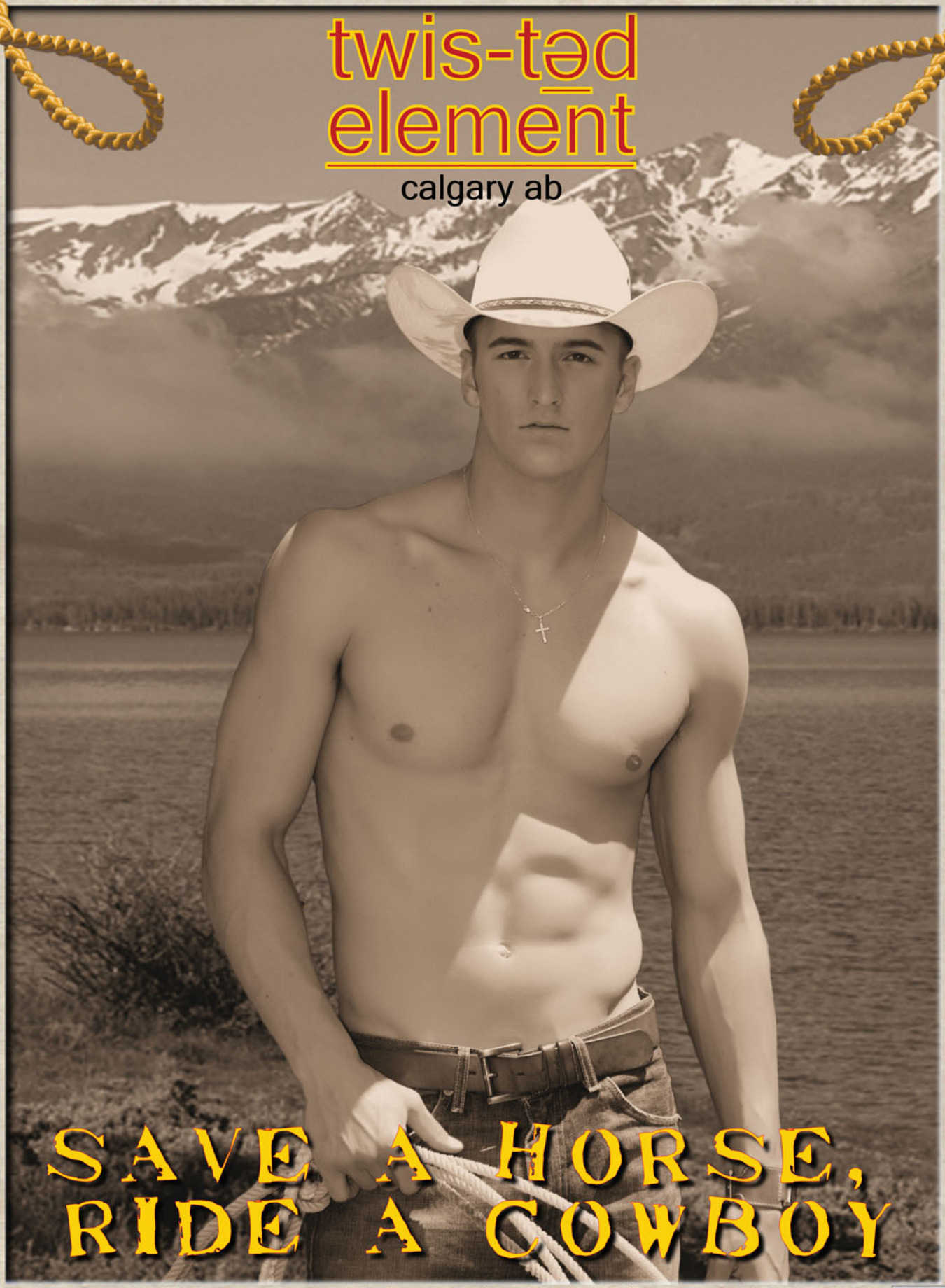

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~ ANDREA ZANIN

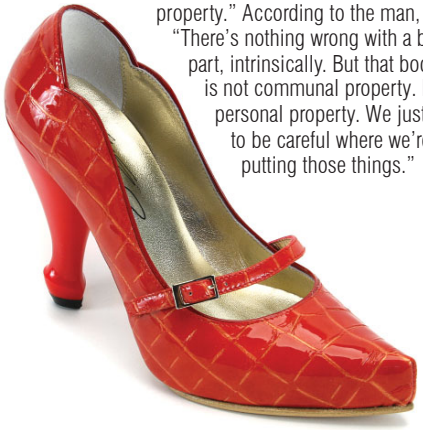
Funky and Fabulous: John Fluevog

Vancouver-based shoe designer John Fluevog has a devoted following among queers of all genders, and with Fluevog, while the shoes may not be cheap, quality is on the menu—along with highly original design and a creative but down-to-earth business approach. The result? Fantastically funky footwear.

$215
Radio **CBC**

$359 CDN
Body Part Pump

The Body Part shoe features the message, "Your body parts are not communal property." According to the man, "There's nothing wrong with a body part, intrinsically. But that body part is not communal property. It's personal property. We just need to be careful where we're putting those things."



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The Danielson: the next big thing for drag kings?

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Mini **Zaza**

The Zaza—a spats-inspired creation using the Mini sole with its famous chunky curved heel—is an Open Source shoe.

Fluevog started out as a shoe retailer in 1970. "I was just a trendy kid wearing velvet bell-bottom pants with flowers printed up the side," he says. "I've been through all these different eras. I didn't start seriously designing shoes until the mid-80s, when I started doing punk stuff. I kinda morphed from retailing shoes into designing them."

Fluevog has lived in Vancouver all his life. "Vancouver is not on the way to or from anything," he deadpans. "It's really isolated." But perhaps that very emptiness is what gave him room to grow. "There's nothing going on here in the shoe business. I think I'm also a watcher and a looker, and being Canadian, we stand back and look at things with a global outlook."

Today, Fluevogs are sold in dozens of American cities, as well as in Australia. In Canada, his shoes can be found at more than twenty retail establishments across the country as well as at Fluevog stores in Vancouver, Toronto and—as of late 2006—Montréal. Despite the challenge of translating ad copy full of "sole" puns into French, and of dealing with a slew of Quebec-specific business regulations, the store has been a success. "I hate to say this—but for me, if I can open up there, the theory is that I can open up in a foreign country."

What's his design inspiration? "Honestly, it sort of pops into my head. I've learned over the years to trust myself and my instincts. And it really is an expression of who I am." Fluevog's footwear comes equipped with some appealing quirks. He starts each of his shoes with a specific sole design and then creates a variety of uppers—sandals, shoes, and boots—in his trademark mix of unusual

Marching with a message

John's take on his shoe messages? "They're about people. If you talk to a woman about her relationship with a man, her biggest complaint will be that he doesn't listen. So, because the Listen shoes have a lot of jam to them, when she's wearing that shoe, you better be listening! Serve and be served, it's like a teapot, but it's also a great value for all of us. If we want to be served, we better serve. If you want something in your relationship with someone, you better be that, before you ask for that. The Satan-proof ones... back in the early 90s, 80s, when Doc Martens were a big deal, there was a culture around them, skinheads and racism, and a lot of Satanic occult stuff. And I just went, 'that kinda sucks.' For me, that's a lie—that you have to approach the dark side to be cool. So I flipped it and said I'm gonna put angels on them and call them Satan-resistant. The reason they've lasted is because they're just really good footwear. The soles are so flippin' comfortable."

colour combinations. The resulting range is known as a shoe "family." Each family has its own message, which is inscribed on the shoe itself, whether on the sole or inside the shoe. (*See Marching with a message.*)

Fluevog works with a small team of designers who *finesse* the details. "I have a big magnetic wall in my Gastown, BC store, and I lay sheets of paper out and then sketch all over the wall. Everything's up there. Then we start discussing it." In addition, he welcomes design ideas from his customers through a process called Open Source Design, in which chosen designs are named after their creators.

But the appeal of Fluevog's shoes extends beyond cool design. In trying to put a finger on it, he muses, "In our day and age, I don't have to be politically correct, I can do whatever the frick I feel like doing, and I hope that comes across that it's not all about profit—it really boils down to my being truthful about who I am, with my employees, with my customers, with myself. I don't want to always go to places that require me to change my behaviour. It comes through. It must be that. It has to be. I've had people buying shoes from me for forty years."

As for the queer appeal... "Yeah, all my career it's been that way because my shoes are kind of alternative. And they're a little edgy and a little different and it sometimes takes a little bit of guts to wear them. Being a trendoid all my life, I know what it's like going through American customs and Canadian customs and looking different, and being harassed for that. Not a lot, but a bit." He pauses for a moment. "Also, my shoes are hot."

Indulge your fetish at **fluevog.com**.

$189 CDN
Teapot **Oolong**

The Teapot family, with a heel shaped remarkably like the spout of a teapot, is adorned with the words "Serve and be served."

$319 CDN
Earl of Warwick **Wessex**
Black

The Earl of Warwick family—just what every leather man and leather dyke needs.

$399 CDN
Twin Turbine Hi **Perry**

The Perry is Fluevog's only high-heeled creation for men, inspired by Jane's Addiction front man Perry Farrell and his draw to ladies' footwear.

$339 CDN
Executor **Rusnak**

$215 CDN
Angel **Derby Swirl**

Perhaps most famously, the Angels family—a best seller for a solid two decades with thick, comfortable unisex soles—boasts a cohort of tiny angels on the sole, along with the statement "Resists alkali, water, acid, fatigue and Satan." Y'know, just in case you were worried.

~ ROBERT REID

With summer FINALLY upon us, its time for a freshening up of our surroundings and finding ways to enjoy a season that, this year, seemed to be a long time in the making. Different designers take the task of making seasonal changes from different perspectives. Some try to make dramatic changes by repainting rooms in the latest-and-greatest colours, while some approach redecorating with very subtle nuances. Regardless of where in the country you may live, take heart—little changes can breathe a whole new energy into your home. Try one or more of the following suggestions and have a unique and new summer experience!

Change out your bed linens to new, summer-weight sheets

With a hot summer looming nearby, it's time to shift the thoughts from our homes protecting us from the rain and cold, to our homes providing a cool place to escape the heat. For a personal treat, change out your bedding with a new set of high-quality, high-thread count (make sure that they are made from single-ply, continuous fibres!) cotton sheets, covers and pillowcases. Like many things, buy the best you can afford, and don't be misled by "high-thread count sheets" that are actually made from multiple-ply fibres, or sheets that are blends of both natural and synthetic fibres. Select white or ivory, which are crisp and clean colours, or go the other extreme and pick up bright blues or yellows. For the best-of-the-best, try SDH (**www.sdhonline.com**). All SDH Legna bedding is creatively designed from all natural elements. The smooth and supple feel of silk is combined with the easy care of cotton. SDH "The Purists" is an all-natural line of products that exemplifies classic elegance. These linens are produced without chemical ingredients, so they use no chemical bleaches, dyes, finishes, or formaldehyde. Other options include Sferra (**www.sferralinens.com**) and Frette (**www.frette.com**).

Also, if you like to sleep with a comforter on your bed, hot and high humidity summers mean that you need to have a summer-weight, down comforter. A summer down comforter is like summer clothes: It's meant to keep you comfortable, without making you sweat!

Accessorizing

Many of us are guilty of having too many accessories and decorative objects around the house and never knowing quite what to do with them all. Instead of feeling obligated to have everything out at one time, divide what you have into separate seasonal categories—spring/summer and fall/winter. Once spring arrives, bring out the glassware, china and porcelain in summer colours. Put away the brass and wood accessories. Find new throw pillows or pillow covers in bright colours and summer patterns. Small throw rugs that are colourful, have lots of pattern and are inexpensive can be found at IKEA (**www.ikea.ca**), Home Depot and RONA. At very affordable prices, you could change out the accent rug in your living room or bedroom a couple of times a year! Consider even having "summer" dishes and "winter" dishes, which can be simply a change in shape or pattern, or a change of colour. Depending on your personal style, there are many off-the-shelf, washable slipcovers available in summer whites and brights, that transform a room in minutes. To get the smell of summer, try some fantastic scented candles to brighten up your home. The "Soleil" fragrance from Voluspa (**www.voluspacandles.com**) is a terrific summer scent. I heard someone once mention that you could almost eat these candles, they smell that good!

Lounging around outdoors

If you have a yard, balcony or any other type of outdoor space, consider changing the seat cushions on your furniture. Have brightly coloured candles (yes, citronella candles to help with insect control can be found in many bright shades), glassware and pottery around. Restoration Hardware (**www.restorationhardware.com**), now available in Canada, has terrific items for use out of doors. Try the series of outdoor, flameless candles and their freestanding "fire pits." They also have a great set of portable, outdoor speakers and MP3 dock, bringing your favourite tunes outside without carrying a stack of CDs. With a new studio/showroom in Toronto, Design Within Reach (**www.dwr.com**) has a great selection of affordable outdoor furniture options, planters and accessories. They also have the "Luau Light," a portable, LED light fixture that is sleek, modern and a great accent to any outdoor area.

If you haven't given any thought to "being at one with nature," you may consider having a shower installed outdoors—one of my absolute favourite things to use during the summer! Yes, you can bring in a plumber and have a permanent fixture installed out in the yard, or you can pick up one of many options for temporary showers. Rittenhouse (**www.rittenhouse.ca**) has a unit available that comes complete with a slatted wood base and is self-supporting. Simply hooked up to the garden hose, it has its own valve and can be ordered with misting body sprays.

Finally, even if you don't have a green thumb, planting flowers in containers provides a shot of colour and a refreshing scent to your sitting area. Many people feel daunted at the prospect of taking on an outdoor decorating project; but don't despair. Simply focus on the area that you will be using and make that area special. It doesn't take a lot of time, effort or money. For a wide selection of contemporary planter options, check out IKEA on-line, PureModern (**www.puremodern.com**) and Crate and Barrel (**www.crateandbarrel.ca**).

~ LAURA MARSH

Know Your Rights

Common-Law Meets Common Sense

When lawyer Lara Percy is at a softball game or a cocktail party, people ask her all kinds of questions: "My girlfriend and I just moved in together last month—does that make us common-law?" "If I renovated my boyfriend's house but I'm not on title, am I entitled to anything when he sells it?" "Can my parents cut me out of their will for being gay?"

Percy, a headstrong solicitor who works for Adrian & Co., a small firm in Vancouver, is rarely surprised by the questions she gets; but she is surprised by how few queers seek legal advice. "These topics are taboo. People don't want to discuss the uncomfortable: 'if we break up, I'm keeping the house' or 'if you die, I think I'd like a cut of this.'" Percy is sensitive to the discomfort, and confides that most of her queer clients come to see her only when they're buying a house. Not nearly enough of us seek legal advice in other areas of our lives.

I recently sat down with Percy in an effort to address some of the questions she hears. Her pointers should not serve as a substitute for a legal consultation, as the application of legal principles is extremely fact-specific. Rather, she is urging queers across Canada to be pro-active about knowing and securing our rights. "No special laws apply just because we're gay," says the out lawyer, "yet the things we need to think about aren't always mainstream issues." By way of example, she reminds, "The idea of chosen family trumping blood relations can be an issue."

"Technically, we have all the same rights as straight people do; but we often structure our lives in non-traditional ways." In spite of gay marriage being legal in Canada, many queers prefer common-law relation-ships when we cohabitate with partners and, apparently, many of us don't know what that means. While definitions of common-law relationships vary from province to province, and even within a province for different purposes, it is generally understood as co-habitation in a marriage-like relationship for a defined period of time. In other words, from the moment the U-Haul drops off your stuff in a joint space, the clock starts ticking. As the requisite amount of time varies, it is important to learn and understand the rules for your province.

Once a couple is common-law, it means that various rights, obligations and considerations arise including tax planning, estate planning and division of property, should the couple split up.

Percy doesn't want to dissuade anyone from cohabitation. She simply likes to remind us that these legal issues need to be discussed with legal advisors. Depending on the facts of a situation, it may be beneficial to draft up a legal agreement while things are good. "Planning for your breakup when your relationship is new sounds cynical but it's actually better," she suggests, "That's when you're able to deal with people fairly. Make legal agreements when you love each other, not when you hate each other."

Once a couple is common-law, it means that various rights, obligations and considerations arise including tax planning, estate planning and division of property, should the couple split up.

Some couples end up in major conflicts over their common-law assets. For many homeowners, the challenge of co-habitation is financial. If a couple is legally married, assets are generally expected to be split 50/50 if the marriage falls apart (unless there is a different agreement). However, when common-law relationships end, both parties will generally leave the relationship with what they brought to it. The end of the relationship is determined by the point of breakup. In other words, continuing to live together after a breakup does not mean a couple is still common-law. As Percy points out, "Generally, a common-law relationship is considered over when a couple is no longer cohabitating or the relationship is no longer marriage-like. So the lesbian couple that breaks up and stays living together for eight months is probably no longer common-law. Conversely, if you end up on a friend's couch for a week because of a fight, you're still common-law." To be sure of your arrangement, however, the safest thing to do is seek legal advice.

What she urges, in all cases, is that queers empower themselves by knowing the legal defaults and then asking themselves whether that works for them. So, if you are co-habitating with your boyfriend who owns the home and you're not on title and you're essentially contributing to his mortgage, ask yourself if you are okay with walking away from that situation in the case of a breakup. Or, would you feel entitled to some reimbursement? In this type of

situation, both parties need to know their legal rights and obligations. "Going to a lawyer is not just something our parents do," says Percy who is just shy of 30. "I'm not sure if it's a generational thing; but we need to learn to take care of ourselves." Percy is particularly opinionated about persons' taking responsibility for themselves in terms of all of life's worst-case scenarios. "Sure, it's unsexy to talk about, but we have to prepare for breakups, incapacitation or old age and death."

Preparing for such contingencies protects not only you, but also your loved ones. Consider a worst-case scenario where you become incapacitated to handle your financial and medical care decisions. It is important to determine how, in your province, to appoint the substitute decision maker(s) of your choice, in case this scenario should ever arise. Failure to appoint a substitute decision maker could result in your next of kin having to go through expensive administrative procedures to obtain this authority, during an already emotionally trying time. It could also lead to disputes among those of your loved ones who see themselves as entitled. Percy illustrates with the example of parents making the claim to a boyfriend, "This is our son. You're just his roommate."

Finally, you are not guaranteed that the person you would want making those decisions will ultimately be the one to do so. Similar considerations apply when appointing an executor to manage and distribute your estate. Again, this is where queer lives might look different from more mainstream lives. If you are the kind of person who changes lovers each season, it might not be a good idea to give this kind of designation to your sweetie. As Percy notes, the law does not care what kind of relationship you have with your substitute decision maker. "You can designate your friend or brother or whomever. You can even appoint more than one person to the task."

Failure to appoint a substitute decision maker could result in your next of kin having to go through expensive administrative procedures to obtain this authority, during an already emotionally trying time. It could also lead to disputes among those of your loved ones who see themselves as entitled.

But since one of the only certainties of life is death, it's important to take these matters seriously. "If you don't plan for it, someone will make decisions for you. And you're leaving people in a position to do this while they're mourning you," says Percy.

Though Percy has seen many disputes over estate laws, the solicitor remains optimistic that, for the most part, the Canadian legal system serves social justice. Discrimination against queers happens but—at least in terms of estate law—it isn't tolerated. "If you're cut out of a parent's will for being gay, take action. You have rights," Percy urges.

She also points out that birth certificates may allow for queer co-parenting and that people living in poly relationships can—and absolutely should—seek legal advice for contingencies that reflect the complicated structures of their unions. Percy also urges couples to seek legal advice any time children are involved, particularly where one person comes into the relationship with a child.

Clearly, these kinds of negotiations require a lot of honesty and open communication. They also show intention and demonstrate love and respect for loved ones. Creating solid and healthy queer relationships is not just a matter of love. It takes careful planning to reflect our values. "Any time you enmesh your life with someone else, these issues are going to come up," Percy says, "It's an opportunity to open up and have important dialogues with the people who matter the most."

from Peter's Pulpit

Rum Thoughts as Summertime Approaches

Long Ago Summertimes—When the Living was Easy

~ PETER CARLYLE-GORDGE

I had planned to write in this issue about the homophobic, gay bashing culture in Jamaica and to lend my support to a campaign to boycott that awful place whose main exports are homophobic rappers—and rum.

American rights group *Truth Wins Out* has launched a boycott of the island and its products, to protest several recent violent homophobic incidents and Jamaica's absurd laws against sodomy.

I think the GLBT community should vote with its wallet against such nasty, intolerant places. I never plan to visit Jamaica, however harsh Winnipeg winters get.

The boycott was launched in New York City at the Stonewall Bar—birthplace of the gay rights movement. The bar's owners and boycott supporters will dump Jamaican liquor and urge people not to travel there.

Bullied, frightened gay rights groups in Jamaica have urged people not to support the boycott, fearing a local backlash that will make their lives worse. But Jamaican Prime Minister Bruce Golding has told Parliament his government will not yield and will not abolish prison sentences for sodomy.

They definitely do not like queer folk over there, and love nothing better than bashing what they call "battymen." Anti-gay lyrics are normal. In the early 1990s, Buju Banton had a Jamaican hit with *Boom Bye Bye*, a song advocating shooting and burning homosexuals.

Nice welcome, eh?

Anyway, giving up rum is no problem for me. I detest it. There is an irony here though. Winston Churchill once described the British navy as "rum, the lash and buggery," so naughty sailors will have to switch to a different tipple if they want to carry on buggering with a clear conscience.

I'll stick to vodka or gin.

Talk of rum does bring thoughts of warm beaches. So, I'm switching gears in mid-stream as this is a summer issue and I want to mellow out and save my fire and brimstone for Jamaica and other medieval places for later issues, when my moral indignation is at warp speed.

My brain needs a rest. It is summer—time to calm down, chill out.

I swear that the months seem to pass faster as you get older. Childhood summertimes seemed to move with the speed of molasses trying to creep uphill.

Does time speed up with age? Now, I seem to blink twice and summer is gone. As the waistline expands, so the seasons seem to contract in an ever-narrowing circle of life.

But, hush, the warmer weather is beckoning: lovely flowers, buzzing bees, flapping birds, ice cream vendors and the serendipitous overhearing of that lovely old lullaby: *Summertime And The Living Is Easy.*

Recently I wrote about Lake of the Woods in Ontario and that triggered delicious, peaceful memories of lapping waters, fish plopping, boat motors droning and sunlight glistening from waves, with distant voices laughing. I pictured winter-worn Canadians shaking off the heavy winter blues—like snakes casting off old, dull, unwanted skins.

I used to go down to Minaki, Ontario, for two weeks every summer. I was young and optimistic and I swear those two weeks rejuvenated me by at least two years.

Canadians wait a very long time for summer, after months of being cooped up like cranky chickens, lousy with cabin fever and with distant, aching longings for a sunlit yesteryear—some halcyon memory of idyllic days, now lost and longed for.

We all need to revert to a slower pace, a quieter time: to recollect in tranquility.

What a pity we lose that innocent imagination as we grow up and toil, "getting and spending and laying waste our powers," as the poet Wordsworth so beautifully put it.

Today we also all seem to be in too much of a rush. The grave comes soon enough; so slow down and smell the lilacs and the roses, but not the Jamaican rum.

Summer gives us a chance to revisit happier places in mind, spirit, body and locale.

I had a financially poor and quite deprived childhood, yet I recognize there was a different quality to Time and Perception. There was more of an ability to live happily in the Present Moment. Today, future planning gobbles up the present. Multi-tasking and racing against the clock damage our health and our souls.

I think technology is wonderful; but we are all doing too much—multi-tasking to an absurd degree. The roundabout is turning too fast. It's time to step off and take a holiday—recreate.

If our forefathers could see us, they would be perplexed. Their world was governed by the rising and setting of the sun. Now, I don't want a return to the old days of slogging our guts out and roughing it with outhouses and ploughs and horses; but surely we can compromise and find sufficient time and space in our busy lives to do nothing and think of nothing very much.

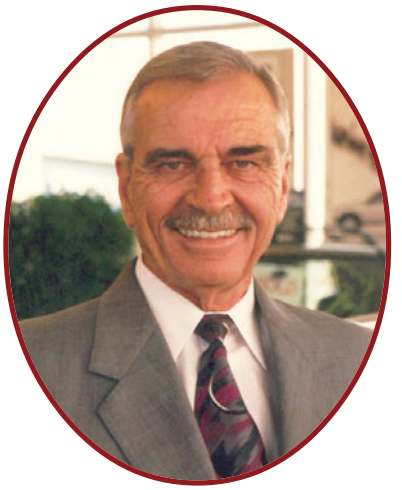
This is summertime, so make sure you try some easy living. Visit the lake or beach, but do avoid Jamaica.

They're a pretty rum lot!

GLOBAL NSSW AWARD

CANADA

Brasso Nissan



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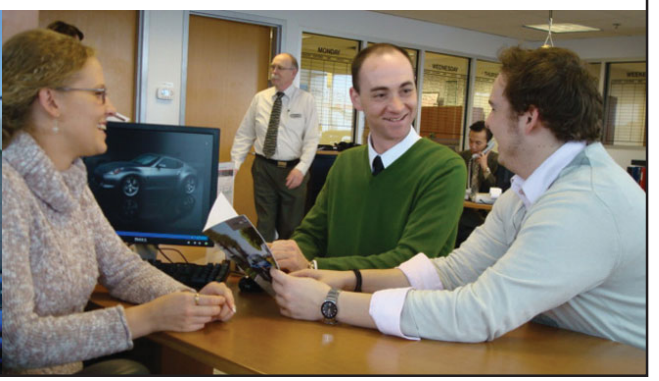

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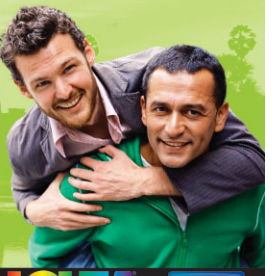

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~ DALE SMITH

Steven Bereznai

Book Review: QUEEROES

Steven Bereznai has always wanted to write fiction–even though his first book was a non-fiction book about being gay and single.

"The first book I ever wrote was a fantasy novel with gay themes in it," Bereznai says. "That was a book I started when I was thirteen years old, and I got to work through all kinds of closeted emotions through it, so it was a great outlet. I still want to publish that book at some point; so, for me, having a non-fiction book published first was still great, but it's not how I envisioned things going. Now, having a fiction book out and one that's sci-fi-ish with tonnes of gay content in it makes me very happy."

Bereznai, a former Editor-in-Chief of *fab* magazine in Toronto, has just released *Queeroes*, a kind of cross between *Heroes* and *Gossip Girl* for the gay crowd. Although the book is geared toward a YA (young audience) readership, Bereznai feels it will still resonate with older gay readers.

"I think that gay guys who have an appreciation for *Buffy* and *Smallville* and *Gossip Girl*, who are a bit younger at heart, will still appreciate it."

Queeroes revolves around a group of high school students who suddenly develop super powers, manifesting parts of their own psychology where they feel deficient–like the geek who suddenly gains super strength.

What is especially interesting is the way that Bereznai ties the development of these powers in with what we currently know about the biological nature of being gay.

"I actually have a biological science degree," Bereznai says. "I'm always very curious to read stuff about the biological origins of homosexuality and how it can fit into evolution, and our social evolution."

Which isn't to say that Bereznai doesn't still have a little fun with it.

As for setting the story in a fairly typical Middle American high school, one has to ask–just what is it with gay men and high school movies, books and TV shows?

"I think that, to a certain extent, we never quite fit into that world, and so perhaps we've never quite left it in the same way," Bereznai muses. "For myself, there's so much energy, angst and excitement, and all of that I think you can sometimes lose once you get a little too entrenched in the traditional family way of doing things–having kids, and doing everything that it entails, and getting tied up with in-laws, et cetera, et cetera. It can suck a lot of the fun out of going out, and being able to go out and really being able to socialize in the way that you used to socialize."

"High school is a really social world and I think the gay world is a lot like that as well. And maybe we just appreciate the silliness of it. It's hard to find a good campy movie these days, and whatever else you might think, teens are pretty campy in their own way."

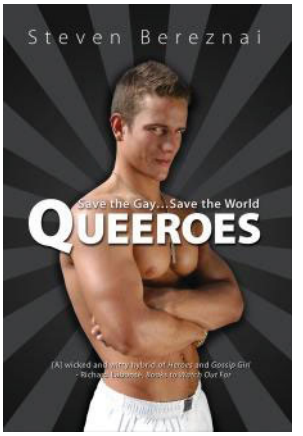
As for future projects, Bereznai hopes to follow up *Queeroes* with a sequel; but he's still planning to write a follow-up to his non-fiction book, *Gay and Single…Forever?*

"It's on the backburner," Bereznai confirms. As with any book that deals with personal material, many things came out, but not necessarily in any one direction, hence making that fateful decision.

"I [needed] to put this aside and come back to it when I can approach it with a bit more logic and a little less emotion in mind," Bereznai says. "I'm still hopeful that I'll have some sort of follow-up."

Queeroes is now in bookstores from Jambor Publishing.

www.stevenbereznai.com



"High school is a really social world and I think the gay world is a lot like that as well. And maybe we just appreciate the silliness of it. It's hard to find a good campy movie these days, and whatever else you might think, teens are pretty campy in their own way."

~ JOSHUA MILLER

Adam sings "Tracks of My Tears" on American Idol

Adam Lambert

one smokin' idol

Every TV you turn on, every magazine you read, and everywhere you turn, everyone is talking about Adam Lambert. This Los Angeles-based vocalist worked the club scene at venues like *Society*, *Metro Mondayz* and *Shits & Giggles*, tearing up the stage with his androgynous sense of style, vocal power and range to make even Mariah Carey jealous. He was, inarguably, the most talked about contestant on American Idol this season, and one of People Magazine's "Hottest Bachelors."

Quick Biography

Lambert was born January 28, 1982 in Indianapolis, Indiana. His family moved west to California a year later where he grew up in San Diego.

Lambert has been a stage actor since the age of ten when he was first cast as Linus in San Diego's Lyceum Theater's production of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. While still a teen, he played a part in *The Ten Commandments: The Musical* at the Kodak Theatre alongside Val Kilmer. Since 2004, he has also regularly performed at the Zodiac show in LA.

Adam is Jewish and has performed in Hebrew at numerous Jewish events. He joins Elliott Yamin as the only other Jewish American Idol finalist.

Adam wasn't sure how being gay would play, both on the show and afterwards, but had to be true to himself, so our newest Glamorized pop star is OUT, GAY and PROUD to be who he is. But what Adam is most excited about is his debut album that is going to keep all "GLAMBERTS" on their feet. Until then you can catch Adam on the American Idol Tour stopping at fifty cities this summer throughout North America. Amongst his hectic schedule I got a chance to talk to Adam about his upcoming projects and what it was like on the show.

Outlooks: After years in Los Angeles trying to "make it" you have hit the big time. You must be on a bit of an emotional roller coaster. What is the hardest to cope with? Don't say the paparazzi, we see the pictures; you're eating it up!

Lambert: The hardest part has to be maintaining my friendships. I'm so busy and I don't want my friends to think that I've forgotten them. It's also difficult because old acquaintances now want to be my new BFF's and it's so obvious why. It's flattering, but difficult to read peoples' true motivation.

Outlooks: It seems that so many contestants on American Idol crumble under the pressure. How did you stay so focused?

Lambert: The pressure is definitely intense, but I've always enjoyed feeling busy and fired up to do projects. The extra expectation helps me deliver a stronger performance. I tried not to see the show as a competition, but more as an opportunity for exposure and experience. That helped keep me less intimidated.

Outlooks: What can we expect (differently) from you on the American Idol Tour?

Lambert: Well, first off, expect sickening wardrobe and eye makeup! I'm also closing my set with an amazing David Bowie medley that gets disco-house at the end. Let's dance!

Outlooks: Is there one song that you have heard that you connected with on such a level that you wish you had written it?

Lambert: "Eclipse" by Robyn—I heard it for the first time and wept. It reminds me of my ex and me. Also "Come Home" by One Republic made me cry as well. It was written about an army wife missing her man—but to me it meant asking for love itself to come to you.

Outlooks: Give us five words that would accurately describe an Adam Lambert performance.

Lambert: High. Fierce. Beat. Horny. Fun.

Outlooks: What was the last song that you listened to that you honestly enjoyed?

Lambert: "Lose You" by Peaches.

Outlooks: You have said you would love to work with artists like Lady Gaga and Madonna. If you had to pick one artist to sing with dead or alive who would it be?

Lambert: I would be honoured and so intimidated to sing with the late Freddie Mercury.

Outlooks: You're a fierce Queen! Who is your favourite drag queen?

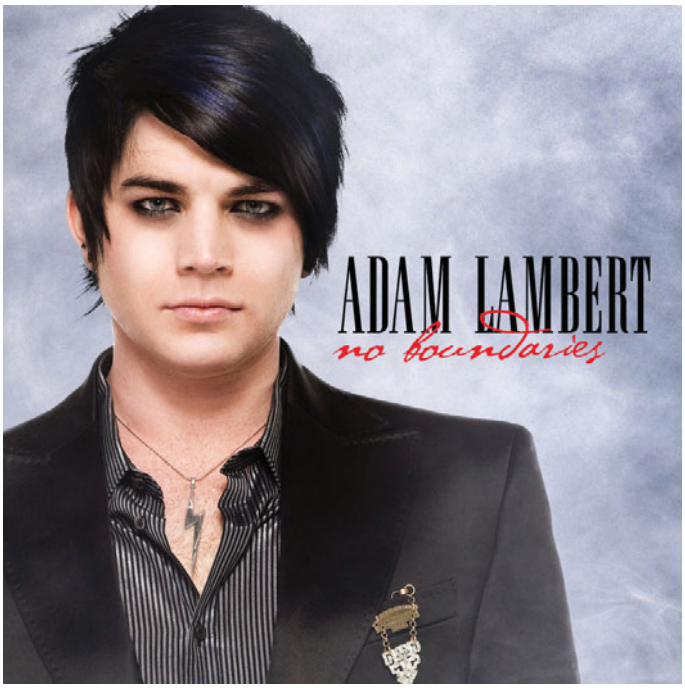
Lambert: Out of fairness, I can't pick one. I love drag queens for the bravery, expression, and attitude they bring to the scene.

Outlooks: Describe your music-making process.

Lambert: I am a team player. I enjoy co-writing where a couple of people sit around and throw ideas out and everyone picks the best lyrics for the song. I also make suggestions for the production of the track as well. As long as I am involved in the creation of the song, I am thrilled.

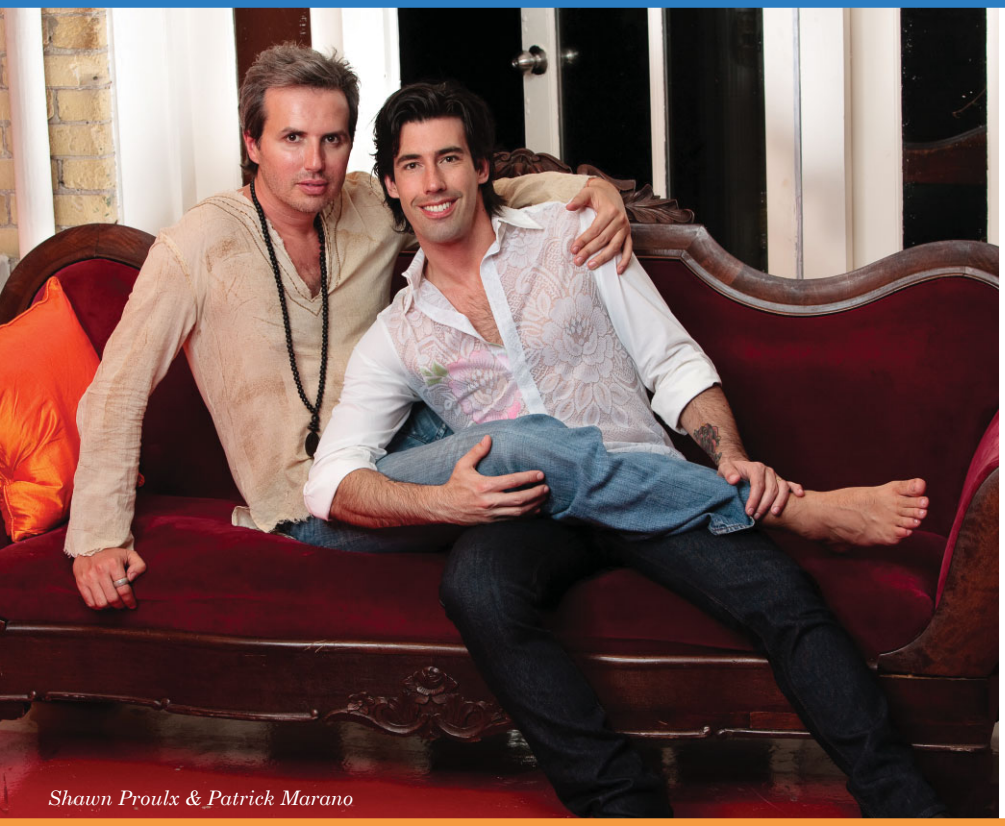
Outlooks: Any advice for struggling artists?

Lambert: Those auditioning should find a way to set themselves apart from the crowd. Think commercially though, this is the music business. If you sing well, they are gonna be more interested in how to market you. Consider the type of artist you'd be and bring all that to the audition. Your song choice, look and presence are just as important as your ability as a singer.



Don't miss Adam on his tour stop in Vancouver on Wednesday, July 8 @ General Motors Place. Tickets available at **www.ticketmaster.com**
For more information visit **www.adamofficial.com**

~ MICHAEL AINS



Shawn Proulx & Patrick Marano

Proulx & M

Canada's Next Power Couple

What happens when a top billing porn star meets an envelope-pushing chronicler of gay sexcapades?

Montréal's Patrick Marano was discovered by porn impresario Chi Chi LaRue while living in Los Angeles. As Eddie Stone, Marano quickly became one of this decade's most sought-after adult entertainers, winning GayVN and Grabby awards for Best Newcomer.

Shaun Proulx is an established columnist in GLBT media, an outspoken activist, and the controversial publisher of **GayGuideToronto.com**.

During an interview in 2007, sparks flew between the pair and they now live together in Toronto, working with 103.9 PROUD FM, the world's first GLBT commercial radio station (**www.proudfm.com**).

We caught up with the power couple to find out how they manage their unique work-home dynamic.

Outlooks: Great to speak with you both. Shaun, is it true that you once wrote for *Outlooks Magazine*?

Proulx: Years ago, yes. I covered the Toronto scene.

Outlooks: You also outed Calgary and Vancouver's best pick-up spots on CBC's *The Hour* with George Stroumboulopoulos?

Proulx: If there's one thing recognizable that readers know I've done, it was that report. I spilled several no-holds-barred secrets on gay cruising—but I was only trying to educate. *(Laughs)* I promise! (Search "Shaun Proulx Cruising" on YouTube.)

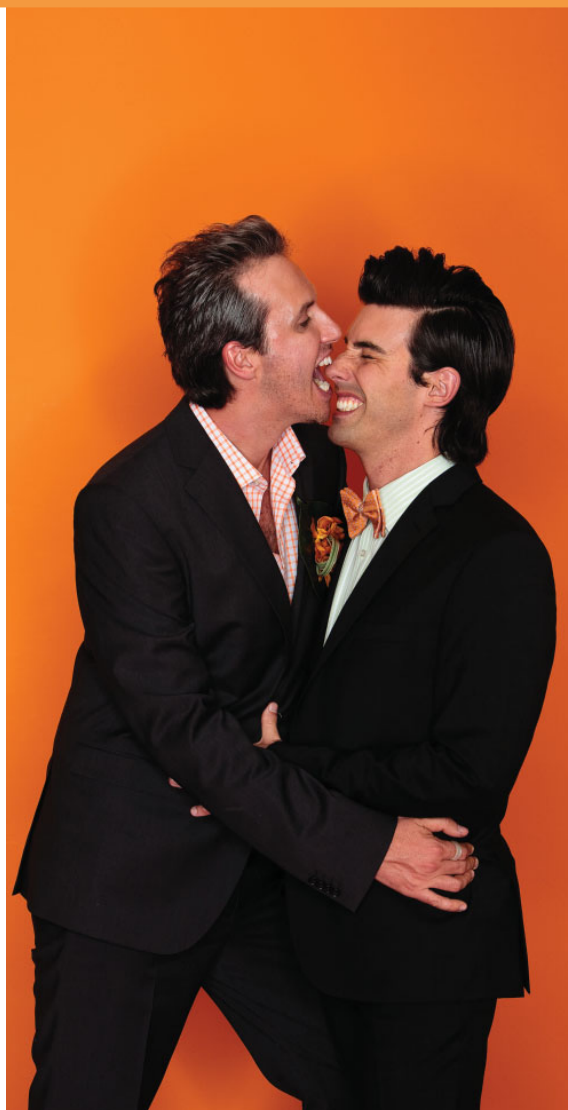
Outlooks: Patrick, is it true you first met Shaun on the phone?

Marano: Exactly—during a radio interview from LA. We talked porn, safer sex, drugs—the things guys usually talk about on a first date. *(Laughs)* But even talking over the phone, I remember feeling chemistry.

Outlooks: But you were living and working in Los Angeles. How did one interview turn into a relationship, two dogs, a cat, and a new Toronto condo?

Marano: I was in transition. For porn, I had worked with top studios, traveled and won awards. I was ready for my next phase, which meant moving back home to Canada to start my own studio. No sooner had my plane landed than I looked up Shaun.

Proulx: (*Laughs*) I don't feel that I've done a good interview unless they are living with me a year later, cleaning up dog poo.



Photography by Wingo Du

arano:

Marano: *(Smiles)* And mopping up pee.

Outlooks: So, with separate time slots and crossing paths daily at ProudFM, what is your home life like?

Marano: It's not glamourous. I have an end-of-day routine: feed dogs—throw on shorts and shirt—crack open beer—start dinner. Shaun gets home—we eat—and then into bed early.

Proulx: Our lives are highly work-focused, which is bad enough for any couple. Our safe word is "Chocolate" if one of us is blathering on about anything work-related.

Marano: We also have a daily slow dance in the kitchen—with or without music. Shaun initiated it. At first, I thought it was silly; but it gives us our moment every day.

Outlooks: Can you give *Outlooks Readers* a hint of what to expect over the next months?

Proulx: Well, I'm excited that *The Shaun Proulx Show* will be seen on OUT TV (slated for August), with three cameras in ProudFM's studio and additional out-of-studio footage. There will be great guests, pee-ourselves-laughing moments, and topical talk—an excellent twenty-four minutes each episode.

Also, this summer I bike from Toronto to Montreal (with co-host Mark Wigmore) for the Friends for Life Bike Rally and the Toronto People with AIDS Foundation.

Marano: For me, developing the mid-day show on PROUD FM is my priority. I will also be launching my studio, and am currently in talks to develop a porn reality show (yes, with men!). Keep posted on my studio's blog: eddiestoneonline.com.

Outlooks: Patrick, having lived in LA, can you offer any comments on Proposition 8 and the banning of gay marriage in California?

Marano: I know many couples affected by Prop 8, and all I can say is to hang in there, I know it's frustrating. They are truly pioneers, paving the way for future generations; but when the day comes, it will be because of their strength and perseverance.

Outlooks: Shaun, as Canada's own "Ellen and Portia," should we expect wedding bells in your own futures?

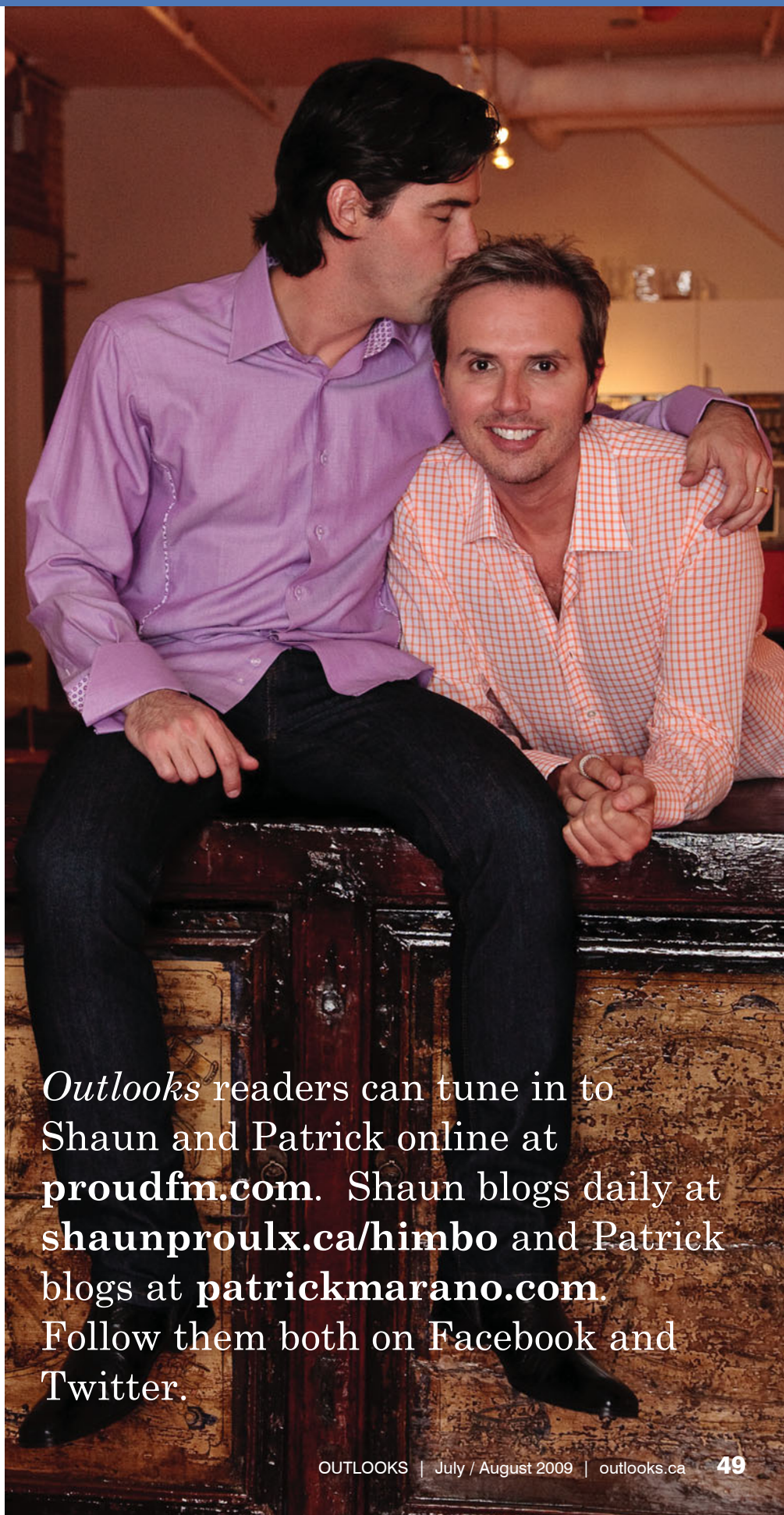
Proulx: The question was asked, I'll say that much.

Outlooks: And what was the answer?

Proulx: Stay tuned! You'll be one of the first to know. And I assume I'm Portia.

Marano: I'm definitely Ellen.

Outlooks: I can take a hint. Thank you both for your time.



Outlooks readers can tune in to Shaun and Patrick online at **proudfm.com**. Shaun blogs daily at **shaunproulx.ca/himbo** and Patrick blogs at **patrickmarano.com**. Follow them both on Facebook and Twitter.

~ PETER CARLYLE-GORDGE

Building **LGBT-inclusive** Workplaces

"As a lesbian woman, I sometimes have had to fend off occasional stereotypes of lesbian women as all butch and muscular and ungainly—I'm none of these."

~ Lesbian woman

Quoted in the Catalyst report on queer folk in the workplace.

Coming out authentically at work as an LGBT person is a bit like deciding to go for a swim in the nude; it's a very personal choice, and it all depends on the time, place, laws, conditions-and temperature of the water or workplace.

Even so, coming out to work colleagues-once considered a no-no unless you were a hairdresser, ballet dancer or airline steward-is becoming a little easier. It's also gaining some serious research attention from blue chip companies interested in being inclusive, retaining staff and ultimately improving the bottom line.

One piece of evidence is the report released, June 4 by Catalyst, a leading non-profit membership organization working globally with businesses and the professions to build inclusive workplaces and expand opportunities for women, minorities and business.

The report, sponsored by Scotiabank and with advisory support and backing from major blue-chip companies such as American Express Canada, BMO Financial Group and Chubb Insurance Company of Canada, says Canada leads the world in legislative protection for minorities, including LGBT workers. But, simply having inclusive workplace policies isn't enough.

Their study found that queer employees cited three factors that affected their career advancement and the formation of critical relationships in the workplace:

- A lack of management awareness regarding LGBT issues.
- Discriminatory behaviours against LGBT employees.
- Exclusion from important connections with others.

In other words, having inclusive policies on paper is one thing; but actually changing attitudes in the workplace is still a work in progress.

They found that LGBT employees at organizations with diversity and inclusion programs, policies, and practices-as well as broader talent management programs-were more satisfied at their workplace, had more positive relationships with managers and colleagues, and generally found the workplace fairer, which in turn encouraged them to stay.

"Lesbian and gay employees working in organizations with more protection from discrimination have higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment. LGBT employees may stay at an inclusive and open workplace, sometimes called a 'safe haven,' even if more lucrative or beneficial job opportunities exist at organizations perceived to be less inclusive," they concluded.

For the study, Catalyst recruited individuals through LGBT organizations in Canada to participate in an online survey of their workplace experiences. It was able to reach LGBT individuals who might not be out at work and might be more comfortable describing their workplace experiences through channels not connected to their employer.

The resulting sample was made up of 232 respondents who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual male-to-female, transsexual female-to-male, queer, questioning, intersex and/or twospirit.

Another set of data used came from a study on career advancement in corporate Canada. This sample comprised 17,908 respondents, 466 of whom identified as LGBT. This data supplemented the findings from the first dataset.

Despite progress, the report found that workplace barriers to career advancement for LGBT employees in Canadian organizations do persist. It concluded that organizations have an important role to play—beyond merely following mandated human rights legislation—in making this population feel included and maximizing its potential.

Some major companies have made more effort than others to be inclusive, but the underlying cause of workplace unease for the LGBT population is a general lack of education about the experiences and challenges of LGBT employees. Other employees often rely on outdated stereotypes.

As one gay male respondent put it: "I think that misconceptions of what it means to be LGBT still exist and can cause people to be concerned that we are going to show up to work one day dressed in drag or leather."

A lesbian employee felt the same: "As a lesbian woman, I sometimes have had to fend off occasional stereotypes of lesbian women as all butch and muscular and ungainly-I'm none of these."

Some respondents reported experiencing blatant and direct forms of homophobia: disapproval, fear, hatred, or hostility toward people who identify as or are assumed to be LGBT.

Such attitudes have negative effects on both health and productivity, the report found.

It also found that inappropriate humour and jokes were often offensive to LGBT people and made them reluctant to come out at work. As one gay man reported: "[MH3]Bosses and senior management have made fun of gay people in social settings, not knowing there were gay people in the room."

"Lesbian and gay employees working in organizations with more protection from discrimination have higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment.

Respondents also cited a lack of LGBT role models in senior positions. This means that people who identify as LGBT employees may question whether they can reach those levels when no one else "like them" has already.

Some queer employees felt that opportunities to make important external connections were curtailed by organizations that presumed that clients and customers would be uncomfortable interacting with LGBT employees. It found that when LGBT employees are overlooked for roles requiring significant client interaction, they experience slower career development. Some reported feeling excluded from networking activities, which are critical to career advancement, because they provide exposure to a variety of people and opportunities to communicate one's skills and ambitions.

Little research has been done so far on the career experiences of gays and lesbians; but one study did find that workplace discrimination—including whether supervisors scrutinize the work of LGBT employees more than that of heterosexual employees—was greater for lesbians than for gay men when employees have male supervisors and work in primarily male teams.

The report says of these workplace attitudes "make it difficult for some employees to disclose their LGBT identity, precluding them from contributing fully to their organization." Those surveyed who had not disclosed their LGBT identity at work cited two primary reasons: a preference to keep personal and professional identities separate, and a fear of potential repercussions. Some respondents said their professional identity is strictly about their work role and they prefer not to bring elements of their personal life to the workplace.

Others decided not to disclose their LGBT identity, based on concerns regarding harassment from others or potential career limitations. Some decided not to come out because they witnessed homophobia in the workplace. Says the report: "For employees who strongly prefer to be out at work but feel that the organizational culture prevents them from doing so, the potential for turnover and lack of engagement is apparent."

Those who had disclosed their LGBT identity at work did it in different ways. Some disclosed in direct ways, for example, publicly identifying as LGBT, while others used more indirect disclosure, such as referring to a same-sex partner. Many felt a strong need to be authentic at work. They expressed little hesitation about coming out and accepted the risk of negative responses from others. As one lesbian put it: "I want to live my life honestly, and because my lesbian orientation is one part of who I really am, why would I hide that? Because I don't define myself by my sexual orientation... coming out was less about **coming out** and more about just **being**."

Transgender and transsexual employees, whose identities may be more visible than those of other LGBT individuals, indicated that they have fewer strategies available. If their appearance makes their transgender identity readily apparent to others, they have no "choice" regarding authenticity. Instead, they may disclose their identity upon arrival at an organization. For this reason, some stressed the importance of finding an organization that is supportive and inclusive.

Because there are always new employees, new work teams, and new clients to form relationships with, respondents described coming out at work as a never-ending process. In addition, they noted that the assumption of heterosexuality is pervasive.

The good news is that some companies—usually in larger cities—are now tackling latent workplace ignorance, hostility and career-limiting attitudes. The report suggests that corporations should proactively build knowledge about how to support LGBT employees.

It says career advancement may be harder in smaller centres where attitudes may be more conservative. Diversity training can play an important role in increasing awareness, dispelling myths and encouraging dialogue about diversity and inclusion. The study found that LGBT employees whose workplaces offered diversity training had more positive workplace experiences than LGBT workers did in places without the program.

IBM has diversity training in all of its offices worldwide; however, only in Canada is the two-day program Diversity and Inclusive Leadership required for all managers and project leaders.

To date, more than 3,000 IBM Canada managers from across the country, including senior executives, have been trained.

Chubb Corporation has also promoted inclusivity programs. To promote internal and external consistency on LGBT inclusion, Chubb reviews its policy language when creating new products. Its website and brochures strive to be LGBT inclusive and it has specifically targeted LGBT insurance markets.

Both LGBT and non-LGBT prospective employees have reported that the importance Chubb gives to LGBT inclusion has sparked particular LGBT interest in working there. Scotiabank also stresses inclusivity and, in 2008, created Scotia Pride to help the bank foster an inclusive environment where all employees and customers feel supported, valued, and respected. It is developing a Pride network across Canada, and strongly encourages engagement with the LGBT community outside. It informs all employees of events and employees of events sponsored by the bank, such as ProPride, the Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life, and the Friends For Life Bike Rally, a six-day bike ride from Toronto to Montreal designed to raise money for the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation. The bank realizes this is good for business as is engaging with more LGBT communities across Canada. Next year, for instance, Winnipeg's Gay Pride celebrations will be held at The Forks, using the Scotiabank stage, rather than at the traditional legislature grounds.

In fact, a key report recommendation is that smart businesses should not only empower and respect their LGBT workers, but also encourage them to give back to their own communities outside of the workplace.

True, they are partly in this to fatten the bottom line, but surely embracing the LGBT presence in their own midst and empowering a rise up the corporate ladder can only be good in creating more positive role models for the community—and ultimately in educating society at large and breaking down walls of ignorance.

For more about this report go to: www.catalyst.org

~ DARRIN HAGEN

When in Berlin

– check out queer films from everywhere else!

The Xposed Internationsl Queer Short Film Festival has a unique—and far-reaching mandate.

Established by Fully Flared Films, Xposed showcases the work of a new nation every year. Previous incarnations of the festival have shone the spotlight on Australian, Canadian, and Korean films. This year, on June 25, the festival focused its gaze on short queer films from Turkey.

Rather than the traditional navel-gazing that accompanies many Pride Festivals (both literal *and* metaphorical), Xposed helps Berlin Pride to look outward—thereby, opening itself to the world and to the artists from a new nation every year.

Festival organizer Bartholomew Sammut explains that searching for short queer films from Turkey was a challenging venture this year. "The reason we decided to make this the focus for our fourth festival, is precisely because we had not seen many queer short films from Turkey - not in short film festivals, nor queer festivals. We spent a large amount of time contacting the gay and lesbian organizations in Turkey, Turkish film festivals, and a lot of underground organizations to source these films."

This year's task was a far cry from the previous year's work. "Because we have been attending a lot of queer film festivals, we always see a large number of amazing queer shorts that fascinate and stimulate us into making a program of shorts inspired by the country of origin. In the past, these have been from Canada and Australia — two countries which we believe are really bringing amazing queer stories to the screen. Since we went on a different approach this year, we couldn't just rely on what we had seen. We had to go out, do a large amount of research and source high and low for these shorts! Triple the amount of time went into creating this program than any other we have made in the past," explained Sammut.

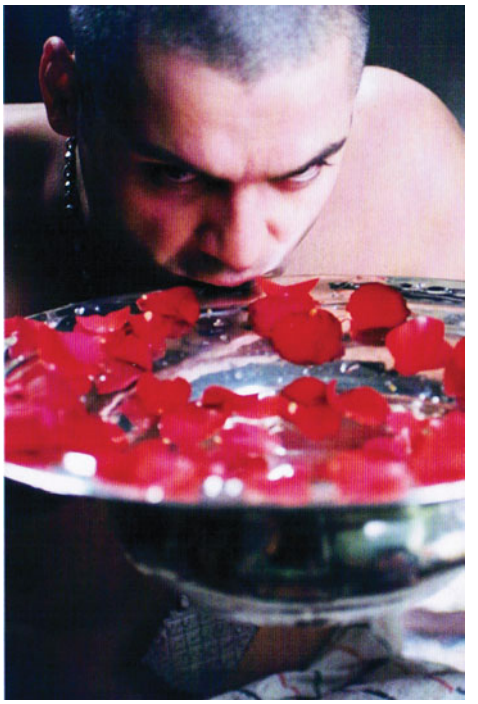
The Turkish queer experience was illuminated by several provocative selections this year—including Aykan Saloglu's "Anti Confessions Vol. 1," which takes a satirical look at the videos made by religious extremists and gives it a queer perspective; "Lot's Wife," created by directors Harjant Gill and Koray Durak, a bold and haunting look at same-sex desire in the Islamic world; and "Makbul—His Favoured One," by Huseyin Karagoz, a 16th-century historic film exploring the nature of power between the Sultan and his slave, the Favoured One in charge of the homoerotic ritualized washing of the Royal Feet.

This nation-by-nation global focus has had a galvanizing effect on the artists from previous years. "The year we programmed Australian films, the queer programmer from the Kyev Molodist International Film Festival in the Ukraine was in attendance, and he loved the program so much, he wanted to bring it to his festival. So around seven of our queer Australian shorts were presented in Kyev in October last year in a special program, which is great as it further extends their international life."

The festival's third year was embraced by a Canadian contingent: a large group of Canadians who traveled to Berlin for the festival. According to Sammut, "This large gang of sexy Canadians were at the core of the party! Berlin's Pride Week brings a large amount of international guests, and a festival like this brings them in touch with the native Berlin queer scene. Bringing these two elements together creates one hell of a night! The screenings are electric and always full of enthusiastic people from all around the world."

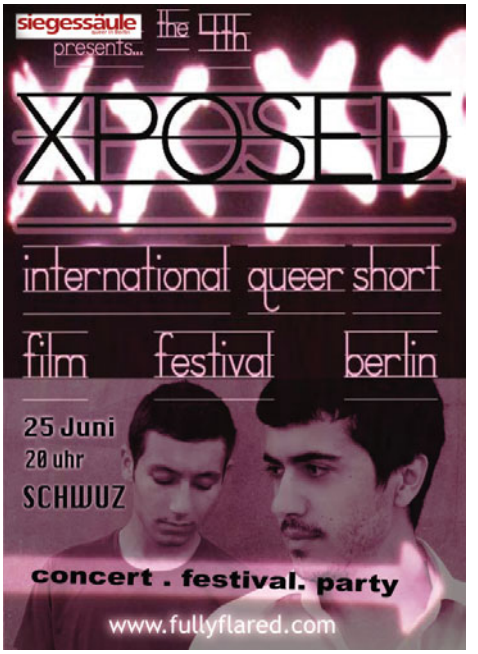
The Berlin audiences are richer for the experience. "The Berliners have so far really appreciated the international focus. We are always worried that things will get lost in translation; but so far, that has not happened. This year will be our first where we screen films in a language other then English, German and French."

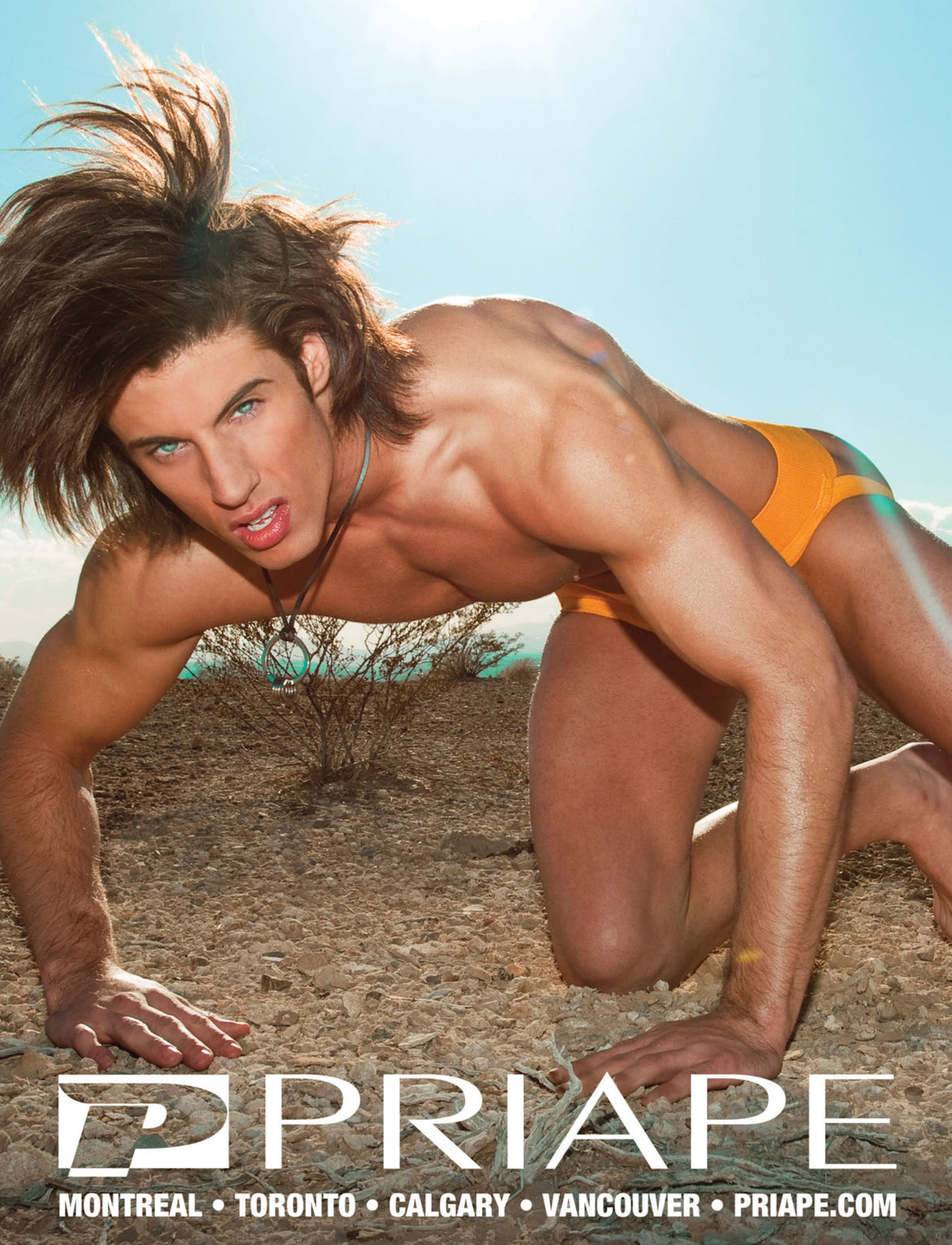
The global community is standing up and taking note. "We are slowly growing in the international queer film community, and the reaction is one of intrigue. People are very interested in how we can pull off a festival like this, and how far it could potentially grow. There is a lot of hope for what this kind of festival can do with its specific



international focus. The excitement surrounding it keeps it going – and the amazing short films make the festival what it is."

For more information on next year's programme, visit **www.myspace.com/xposedinberlin**, and **www.fullyflared.com**.

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OUTLOOKS

live at the Tony Awards

Outlooks own Perry Mah, live on the Red Carpet

It was a night that celebrated everything—from the wild freedom of the 60's, to a youth's passion for living through dance—as the 63rd annual Tony Awards honoured the best of Broadway, in style. The awards, as nicknamed after founder Antoinette Perry, recognized the efforts and achievements among the diverse 2009 New York theatre season. *OUTLOOKS* Magazine paid a visit to the Big Apple to bring you all of the excitement—from the red carpet arrivals to backstage, with the winners.

Stage and screen stars gathered at Radio City Music Hall as the grand theatre once again played host to the extravaganza, with actor Neil Patrick Harris at his comic best as first time emcee. A number of musical numbers were showcased throughout the broadcast, beginning with a rousing opening montage featuring various nominees like *Billy Elliot*, *West Side Story*, *Shrek The Musical*, *9 to 5*, *Hair,* and more.

The night belonged to Elton John's musical, *Billy Elliot*, winning ten awards out of the fifteen nominations it received, including Best Musical. 15-year-old Montréal native, David Alvarez, a newcomer to the stage, shared his prestigious award for Best Leading Actor in a Musical with the two other actors playing the tough role of Billy.

Backstage, all of the winners graciously gave me their thoughts on the evening and their awards before heading off to the official after-party at Rockefeller Center to celebrate the conclusion of a successful year.

Gina Gershon & Edie Falco

Red Carpet Arrivals...

Frankie Valli and the "Jersey Boys"

Mama Mia Lead Actresses Rachel Tyler, Michelle Dawson, Kittra Coomer

Bobby Dall and Bret Michaels of "Poison" and Constantine Maroulis

Anne Hathaway

Dolly Parton

Bebe Neuwirth

Piper Perabo

And the Tony Goes to...

Angela Lansbury (Best Performance by a Featured Actress in a Play)

Outlooks: Angela, you seemed quite surprised when your name was called, why?

"I never believed in my wildest dreams I would have an opportunity to receive another Tony... this is such a complete surprise for me to be, shall we say... allowed to come back to Broadway in this time in my life and to be able to do a piece of good work like *Blithe Spirit.* I am so very grateful."

Jerry Herman (Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre) is a multi Tony-award-winning composer and lyricist of the classic Broadway musicals *Hello, Dolly!*, *Mame*, *La Cage Aux Folles*, *Mack & Mabel*, and many more.

Outlooks: Are you working on any new projects?

"No, I'm not... I think that my style of music has come and gone and it was very very good to me... I really think it's better to know when to leave than to end up with two or three shows that just didn't make it, so I left at the height of my career. I'm very happy and don't want to do anything now but enjoy my old age."

Sir Elton John (Best Musical)

Outlooks: Could you see how successful Billy Elliot would be as you were writing it?

"To get to this point with *Billy Elliot* is where I want to be... the thing I love about this business is that you never know what is going to happen the next day or what's around the corner, so I'm just grateful that I saw the film of *Billy Elliot* in Cannes—otherwise I wouldn't have thought of doing the musical."

Pictured above with Sir Elton John *(l to r)* are David Alvarez, Trent Kowalik, and Kiril Kulish, who all rotated and played the role of the lead in *Billy Elliot.*

Liza Minnelli (Best Special Theatrical Event)

Outlooks: Do you see yourself as a Broadway icon, a gay icon, who is Liza?

"To me, I'm just a gypsy, you know.... The thing I love to do is rehearse and get up and work; go to dance classes. I'm thrilled, I must say, and I'm grateful and all that jazz [laughs] but I really am, really startled... an icon, hmm a gay icon; I love it!"

Out & about EDMONTON

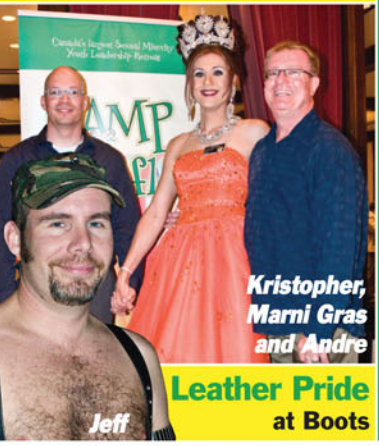
Nat, Heather, Felicity, Christie of Exposure Festival

Brendyn

Patio Party at Latitude 53

Pride Celebration in the Square

Mayor's Pride Brunch at Chateau Lacombe



Kristopher, Marni Gras and Andre

Jeff

Leather Pride at Boots

Terry & Bryce

PURE Pride at Play

Dawn & Lizzie

Planning an event in Edmonton? Contact jackson@jacksonphotografix.com and he'll see about covering it in Out & About. Photos by: jacksonphotografix.com

Out & about VANCOUVER

Winner Paul

Jason, Justin and Jeremy

Butch

Pulse GMF May 24 at Pulse

Mr. Rubber June 12 at PumpJack

Miss WESA May 13 at Celebrities

Mr. Pulse

Miss Maxwell

Britney

Planning an event in Vancouver? Contact Barry at 604.685.1377 and he'll see about covering it in Out & About. Photos by: Barry Piersdorff

Out & about MONTREAL

Piknic Electronik
June 7 & 15 at Parc Jean-Drapeau
Photos courtesy of Erick Contreras

REGINA Out & about

Barbeque

Prairie Pride Chorus

Regina Pride Celebrations
June 13 - 20 Photos courtesy of Doug Smith

White Party

Smyth&Kang Transformed
June 18 at Smyth&Kang Downtown

Clothing Designer Haithem Elkadiki, Interior Decorator Aly Velji, Leon Kang of Smyth&Kang, Jason Krell of Tara Parker Tait PR

Planning an event in Calgary? Contact Perry at pmah@outlooks.ca and he'll see about covering it in Out & About.

CALGARY Out & about

Roxy Riccochet, Mz. Tony, Dyna Myte

Two Queens in a Tub AFQOL
June 19 at Texas Lounge

Honourable Hedy Fry, Liberal MP

MP Hedy Fry Speaks
June 11 at Twisted Element

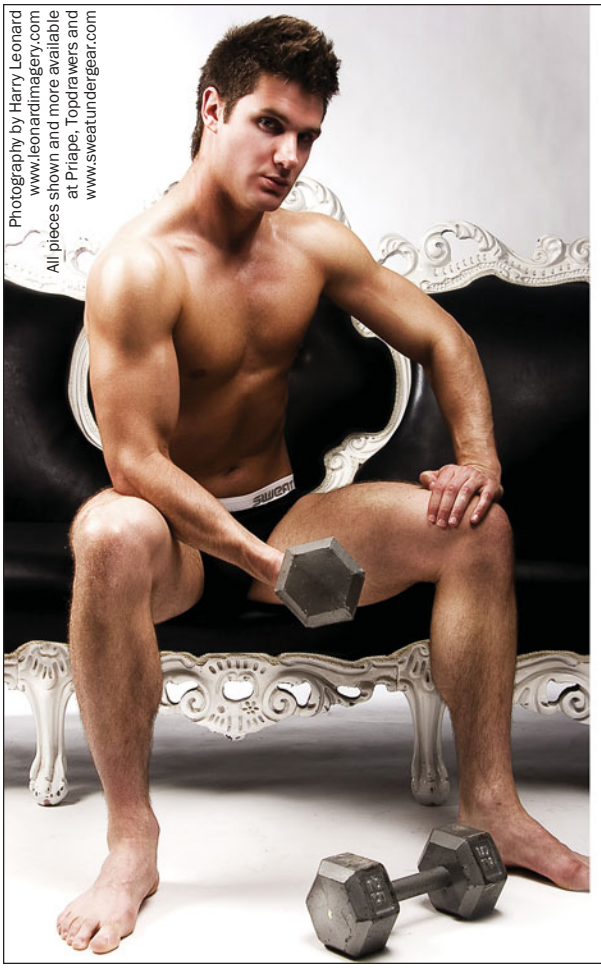
11th Annual Fairytales Queer Diversity Film Festival
May 26 - June 6

Actor Billy Merasty, Director Kevin Lee Burton, Festival President Gordon Sombrowski

Leslie, Tami, Mairead of the festival programming committee.

Filmmaker Marjorie Beaucage, Author Gregory Scofield, Director Adam Garnet Jones, Festival Treasurer Danielle Ladouceur.

Director Lorne Olsen, Debi Bell



Photography by Harry Leonard
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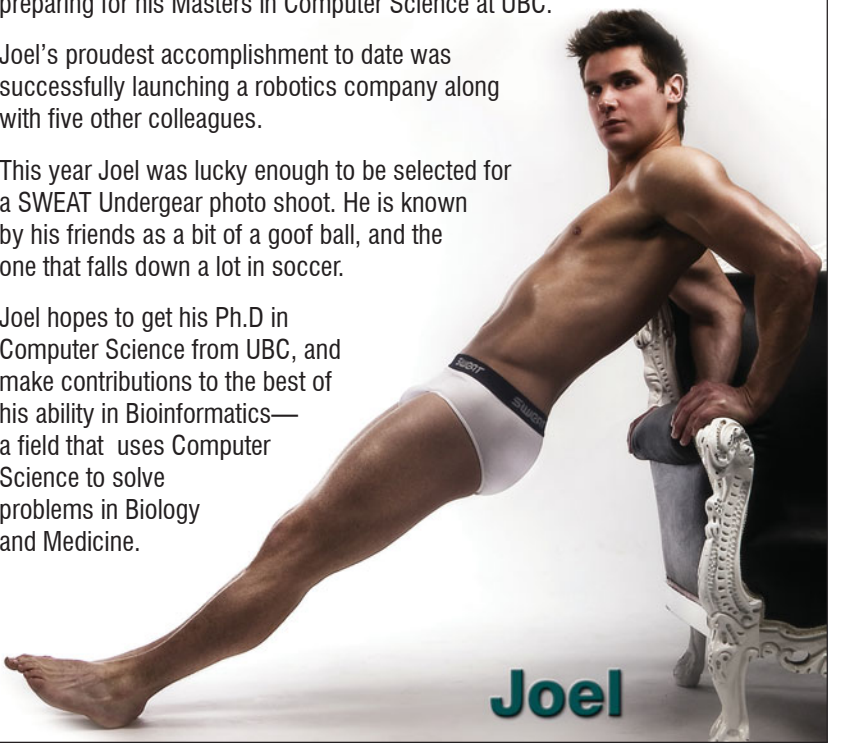
Don't You Wish ...

Joel is 26 years old and currently lives in North Vancouver. He comes from a background in competitive gymnastics and track and field, but this summer he is playing soccer with the Out for Kicks league, hitting the beach, and preparing for his Masters in Computer Science at UBC.

Joel's proudest accomplishment to date was successfully launching a robotics company along with five other colleagues.

This year Joel was lucky enough to be selected for a SWEAT Undergear photo shoot. He is known by his friends as a bit of a goof ball, and the one that falls down a lot in soccer.

Joel hopes to get his Ph.D in Computer Science from UBC, and make contributions to the best of his ability in Bioinformatics—a field that uses Computer Science to solve problems in Biology and Medicine.



Joel

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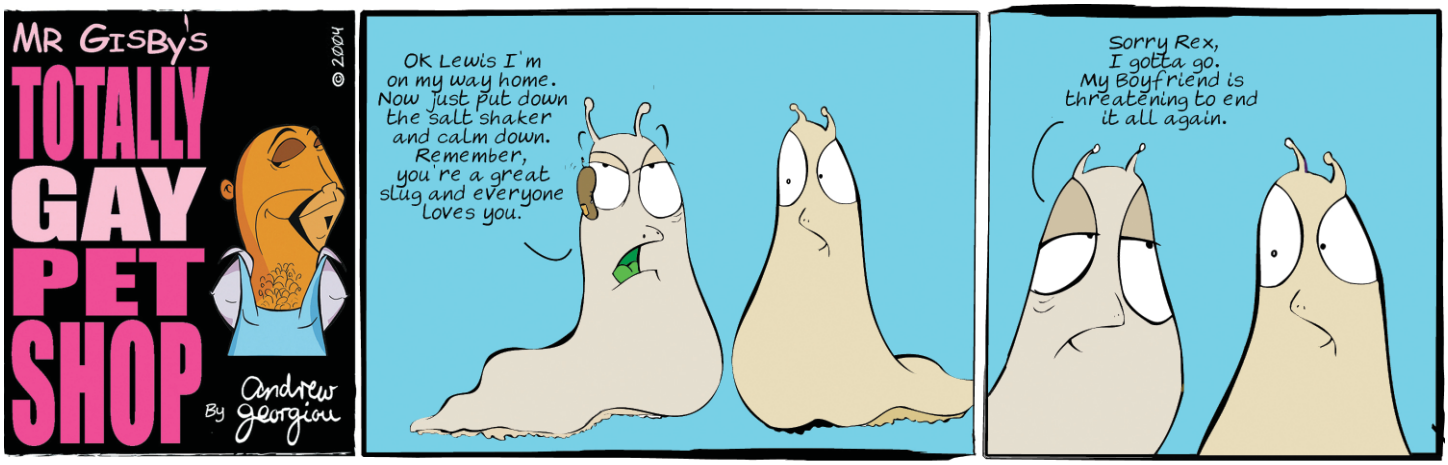

Summer Horoscope

Turn your ha ha ha into ha cha cha this summer when any steamy thought or comment boils over. Mercury opposes Pluto and pack a jolt. Aim your missives carefully... and shoot from the lip.

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)
Even if your home life is not perfect there is a great deal to recommend it. Proud Rams find that good thoughts take them far with relatives and in their home surroundings. And, with domestic knots untangled, you can focus on manifesting transformations on the job front. Enlist a friendly helping hand to assist you in your corporate climb. Don't step on their fingers.

TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)
Stop talking to yourself or to just your small coterie of rabid fans. The summer demands that you get your ideas pushed out into the blogosphere as soon as possible. Many of your opinions have the potential to change the global landscape while others are mere potholes that will trip you up. The questions is—do you know which is which, queer Bull?

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)
Many pink Twins lapse into mind games when they really should take a risk and deliberate action. This summer, confound the experts and get up off your contemplative pose and get into action. Express yourself with the powers-that-be. Glad handing potentially well endowed benefactors might wind up delivering you a lump sum or two. Some folks have all the luck!

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)
Gay Crabs may chaff at the leash this summer. Not only do you ache for some time alone, you need it in order to re-approach, refresh and reassess certain cloying relationships. Are partnerships giving you what you need? Honesty will be the best policy... unless it is brutal honesty. So be sure to add some sugar to every bitter pill to avoid indigestion.

LEO (JULY 24 - AUGUST 23)
Keeping secrets to yourself will not move the needle on the job. Proud Lions with ambition need to be forthright in their opinions, especially when it has to do with their role in the organization or with the expectations of their co-workers. Are you meeting or exceeding your agreed upon goals? If not, prepare for some big changes this summer.

VIRGO (AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 23)
Sitting at home and eating in front of the television may have its charms at other times of the year but in July and August the fates demand that you expand your social reach and get out of your safe cocoon. Queer Virgins can meet new and interesting friends now who will prove to be pivotal to your future happiness. Press and impress... and I don't mean the couch cushions.

LIBRA (SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 23)
You are brimming with great professional ideas. Can you get anyone in authority to listen to you? All bets are off now unless you find important and powerful folks from other areas of your life to come to your assistance. Proud Libras are charmers so turn up the heat on your charisma and see how brightly you can burn. Stop at warm before you become toast.

SCORPIO (OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22)
They say "those who can't do, teach" but that is plain wrong. Queer Scorps not only can "do", they are also able to impart their wisdom effectively. So use this summer to spread your word and see how lucrative it will be. Even better, use your knowledge to become and effective leader. Create a new ground swell and use it as fertilizer for your own victory garden.

SAGITTARIUS (NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22)
Gay Archers are known for their reckless extravagance and this summer is no exception. You are full of love and have no qualms about lavishing your affections and money on a certain delightful someone. But limit your budget to affordable treats. Sometimes you can win hearts through good deeds rather than grand trinkets. Sometimes...

CAPRICORN (DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 20)
You, me or we? That is the question. Pink Caps expect to find all the answers to their life course within another person. But the surprise conclusion is that you have all the answers you need for your personal happiness all within yourself. Of course a second opinion from you-know-who can sometimes be appreciated. But it is all icing on the beefcake.

AQUARIUS (JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 19)
There are no secrets at work so avoid long lunches and mental health days. And if you decide to cheat on your diet there will be no calorie-free option. The gremlins will gleefully add on the pounds. Aqueerians can't seem to get away with anything this summer, try as they will. So don't even try. Be honest, thrifty and clean... until August.

PISCES (FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20)
Turn your attention to creative pursuits. Guppies can expand their artistic impact by enlisting the help of friends. But an even better, more effective way of making your mark on the landscape is to join new relevant organizations that place you in touch with the experts. Ask advice, listen carefully and then show the world how it is really done.

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Lichtenstein's blog **www.thestarryeye.typepad.com** covers everything new age. Her astrology book *HerScopes: A Guide To Astrology For Lesbians* is the best in tongue-in-cheek astrology.

This Summer in Canadian Gay History

Police outside Sexgarage, July 16, 1990
Photo: ©Linda Dawn Hammond 1990

1990—July 15 is a momentous date in the history of Québec Gay Rights. When a group of overzealous Montréal police officers decide to violently break-up the "Sex Garage" party in Old Montréal, a series of events unfold in what is widely-held as Montréal's version of the Stonewall Riots. That night, 400 primarily gay, lesbian, and transgender revellers are taunted, brutalized, and arrested while trying to leave the party.

Enraged and no longer willing to settle for unfair targeting, giant protests occur on that same night and the night following. Images of the brutality outside the "Sex Garage" party circulate around the globe and nearly three million Montréalers are finally made aware of the fear and conditions constantly faced by Montreal's GLBT population.

Over the remainder of the summer, the events of July 15 lead to an investigation and a series of recommendations by the Human RIghts Commission that fosters in a new era of cooperation and mutual respect between a newly sensitized Montréal Police Force and the GLBT Community. Today, the MUC Police is considered an ally in combating homophobia and protecting our rights.

Lastly, the "Sex Garage" protests also mobilized the GLBT community and opened the door to a new era of inclusiveness, particularly with respect to the transgender population, homophobia, and protecting our rights.

AMAZINGLY SIMPLE Home Remedies

- Avoid cutting yourself when slicing vegetables by getting someone else to hold them while you chop.
- For high blood pressure sufferers: simply cut yourself and bleed for a few minutes, thus reducing the pressure in your veins. Remember to use a timer.
- A mousetrap, placed on top of your alarm clock, will prevent you from rolling over and going back to sleep after you hit the snooze button.
- If you have a bad cough, take a large dose of laxatives; then you'll be afraid to cough.
- You only need two tools in life—WD-40 and Duct Tape. If it doesn't move and should, use the WD-40. If it shouldn't move and does, use the duct tape.
- If you can't fix it with a hammer, you've got an electrical problem.

SUDOKU PUZZLE

Fill in the blank squares so that each trow, each column, and each 3-by-3 block contain all of the digits 1 thru 9.

If you use logic you can solve the puzzle without guesswork.

						2		8
9	2				4			
			2		8		7	1
	3	6						
			7		9			
						6	4	
8	6		4		1			
			9				2	7
2		9						

Brian Samuel Epstein

Born 19th of September 1934, Liverpool, England; died 1963.

Childhood: Brian Epstein's parents were Harry and Malka Epstein. He had a brother Clive born 22 months later. His mother was called "Queenie" by his father because Malka is the Hebrew word for queen.

Work: Brian Epstein began to work in the family furniture store in 1950 at the age of 16. In 1952, he was conscripted into National Service; but was discharged ten months later because he was emotionally and mentally unfit to serve. In 1954, he began to manage Clarendon Furnishing in Hoylake, another family business. Epstein briefly joined the Royal Academy for Dramatic Arts to train as an actor; but soon dropped out after he found that it did not suit him.

When the family acquired North End Road Music Stores (NEMS), Brian Epstein was put in charge of the ground floor where he expanded from pianos and wireless sets to gramophone records. This was very successful, and he opened another branch, a short distance from The Cavern club. He began writing a column on records in the music publication *Mersey Beat* on the 3rd of August, 1961.

In 1961, Epstein found that he had been selling a number of records by The Beatles, and he went to see them at The Cavern club. Afterwards, he went to speak to them and offered to manage them. On the10th of December, 1961, it was decided that Epstein should be the manager of *The Beatles*, and a contract was signed on the 24th of January, 1962. He secured a record contract for them with EMI, and, on the request of John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison, he sacked the drummer, Pete Best, so that Ringo Starr could replace him. Brian Epstein remained the manager of *The Beatles* until his death.

He also managed other artists who did not become as successful. Brian Epstein appeared on television a number of times, and hosted a regular slot on the US television show *Hullabaloo*.

Friends and Relationships: Epstein had bouts of depression and took pills to enable him to sleep, as well as to wake him up. He also experimented with recreational drugs. Epstein made no secret about being gay, and, in fact, there has been speculation that he was in love with John Lennon and indeed spent a dirty weekend with him as a present. His death was caused by an overdose of drugs. Whether this was an accident or deliberate has been open to speculation.

Greatest Achievement: Undoubtedly helping *The Beatles* to become what they became.

THOUGHT for the SUMMER...

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